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LOUIS XI of FRANCE.

THE LIFE OF LOUIS XI

THE REBEL DAUPHIN AND THE STATESMAN KING FROM HIS ORIGINAL LETTERS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

By CHRISTOPHER HARE AUTHOR OF "MARGUERITE OF AUSTRIA," "A QUEEN OF QUEENS," ETC.

ILLUSTRATED

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INTRODUCTION

It has been said that "A biographer is bound by a sort of feudal tenure to rehabilitate the lord under whom he takes service."[1] Yet such was not my intention when I began the serious study of the life and letters of Louis XI, in the hope of writing a simple and graphic sketch of that most interesting period. Day by day the subject has grown in importance and fascination, as I realized the splendid wealth of material placed within my reach by the patriotic labours of the Société de l'Histoire de France, and of which I am probably the first English writer to avail myself.

Under the auspices of the Society, an immense mass of Louis XI's correspondence has been collected and published; no less than nineteen hundred and thirty-five "lettres missives"—original letters written or dictated by the King himself—and over two hundred "pièces justificatives" in nine large volumes. The first volume was published in 1883, and consisted of the letters of Louis the Dauphin, collected and annotated by the archivist, M. Etienne Charavay. This heroic pioneer of historical science had devoted twenty years of his life to the arduous task, and so completely was he won over to "feudal service of his lord," that in his Preface, after enumerating the

[1] Freeman's *Essay on Charles the Bold.*

great deeds of statesmanship and prowess of the Dauphin, M. Charavay is proud to call him "mon héros." From these letters we gain a vivid insight into that most interesting period of Louis XI's life when, as Dauphin, he studied the arts of governing and of warfare. This will be fully dwelt upon, as it has been but lightly touched by most historians.

The remaining eight volumes of Louis the King, 1461-82, have been collected and illustrated with profound research by the archivist, M. Joseph Vaesen, and have been published at intervals, the ninth volume having only appeared in 1905, and bringing us down to within a year of the death of Louis XI. Unfortunately the final volume with Index and Biographical Notes is still only in progress.

The historian, P. F. Willert, who wrote a Life of Louis XI in 1876 (Historical Handbooks), regrets that these letters were not available then, yet in many points he forestalls the later view therein given of the character of Louis XI, which has also been so warmly advocated by recent French writers, such as M. Urbain Legéay. He remarks that a student "may perhaps be perplexed to find Louis presented in a light so different from that in which, owing to an early acquaintance with 'Quentin Durward,' he may have learnt to regard him."

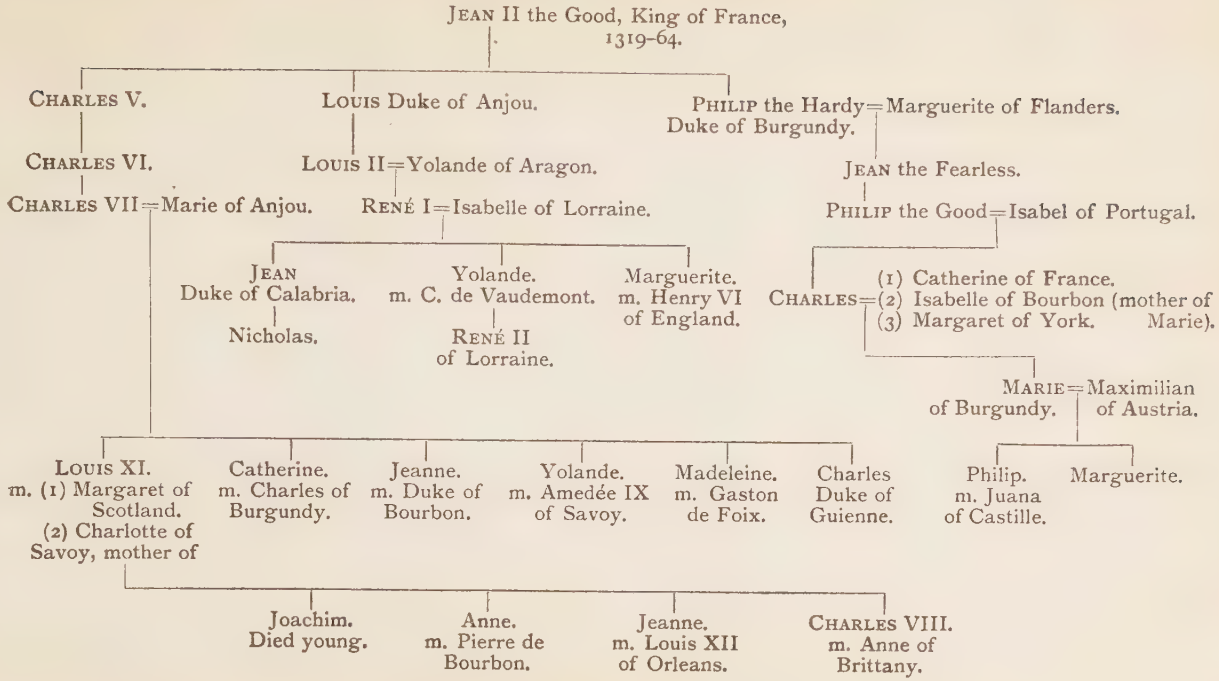
As we read through this immense correspondence of the King's on all possible subjects, showing the most intimate knowledge of his people's wants and the most earnest desire to satisfy them—as we study the royal edicts, the old chronicles of various towns, and even the carefully kept accounts of the reign, we do indeed learn to reconsider the unfavourable

verdict on the character of Louis XI, too much taken in this country as a *parti pris* alike by historians and novelists. Perhaps we dimly feel that Sir Walter Scott, from whom our earliest and strongest impressions are derived, made Louis XI an unmitigated villain only for his dramatic purpose. We do not like to be robbed of our villains who provide us with so much excitement on the stage of life.

Yet as we follow the course of the great Statesman-King through all the tangled politics and feuds of this "most difficult period of history," the story becomes one of supreme interest while we watch "l'homme moderne en lutte contre le moyen âge ; l'organisateur sérieux, le pacificateur réel, contre la discorde éternelle du monde féodal."

An attempt will be made in the last chapter to consider the various contemporary and other memoirs, chronicles, and histories of Louis XI, their trustworthiness, or the different reasons which they may have had for prejudice and misrepresentation. This will permit the life of Louis XI to be retold simply and dispassionately, from a study of the wealth of authentic documents and undoubted testimony, without being delayed by constant reference to matters of controversy. "Nothing extenuate nor set down aught in malice" is my motto.

GENEALOGICAL TABLE



LOUIS THE DAUPHIN

CHAPTER I

HIS BIRTH AND LINEAGE

1423

CHARLES VII AND MARIE OF ANJOU — YOLANDE OF ARAGON — THE DARKEST HOUR FOR FRANCE — CONQUERED BY ENGLAND — JEANNE D'ARC — RELIEF OF ORLEANS — TURNING OF THE TIDE — CORONATION OF "CHARLES THE VICTORIOUS."

IN the very heart of old Touraine, within the ancient city of Bourges, rising proudly with its towers and battlements above the meeting rivers of the plain below, a notable event took place nearly five centuries ago. On the 3rd of July, 1423, was born a prince of the royal house of France, the eldest son of Charles VII and Marie of Anjou, known in days to come as Louis XI, one of the most striking figures in history. When but a day old, the infant heir was borne to the baptismal font within the splendid cathedral of Saint Etienne, and the stately procession of priests and nobles and ladies of the Court passed beneath that glorious central portal, where still stands forth the sculptured vision of the Last Judgment.

The child did not receive the name of his father, for "Charles" was of ill-omen since the misfortunes of the

previous reign, nor was he called Jean after his godfather the young Duke of Alençon, as the long captivity of King Jean II was still a bitter memory. The well-beloved name of Louis may not only have recalled the fame of his sainted ancestor, but may have seemed a happy omen for the boy's life and character. The old chronicle is so minute as to tell us the name of his nurse, Clémence Fallone, who is mentioned on several occasions in the royal account books. Her position was one of honour and importance, as we realize on seeing, in the ancient church of Saumur, the monument of another royal nurse of the same family, whose image carved in stone bears a swaddled babe on each arm—René the Good of Anjou, and his sister Marie, the mother of Louis XI.

Perhaps the most interesting figure present at the baptism of the royal infant was his grandmother, Yolande of Aragon, Queen of Sicily as she was popularly called. She plays so important a part in the life of her daughter's husband, Charles VII, both before and after the birth of Louis, that his story would be incomplete without a brief account of Yolande. The daughter of Juan I of Aragon, she married Louis II, Duke of Anjou, in the year 1400, at Arles. Their eldest son, Louis, was betrothed to Catherine, daughter of Jean sans Peur, Duke of Burgundy, by whose orders the Duke of Orleans, husband of Valentine Visconti, was murdered in 1408. On hearing of this terrible event, the Duke of Anjou sent back the little princess to her father, with all her splendid dowry, jewels, and presents, as he refused to be allied with a murderer. The House of Burgundy never forgave this affront, which was the cause of long intermittent warfare.

On the death of her uncle, Martin the Humane of Aragon, without an heir, Yolande asserted her claim to the throne, but she crossed the Pyrenees in vain, for the crown was given to Fernando, "Regent of Castile," the son of the late King's sister, Leonora. Soon after this, in October, 1413, a marriage was arranged between her eldest daughter, Marie, and Charles "Comte de Ponthieu," the third son of the King of France. As Charles VI had one of his fits of madness at the time, it was his wife, Isabelle of Bavaria, who met Yolande, first at the manoir de Mancoussis where the preliminaries were settled, and afterwards when the ceremony of betrothal was performed between the two children at the palace of the Louvre, with great pomp and splendour.

The motherly instincts of Yolande were aroused on behalf of this young prince who was to be so nearly allied to her, and whose wretched childhood had been so neglected, with a mad father and a mother given up to luxury and every evil pleasure, leading a dissolute and shameful life. Isabelle is said to have hated her son Charles, and certainly her later actions justify this accusation. The mother of his betrothed bride came to the rescue and took away the boy of ten, to treat him henceforth as one of her own children. Marie was a year younger, and the little René, born in 1409 (afterwards known as the "Good King"), grew up to be his companion and playfellow, and they remained constant friends through life. It is interesting to find in old account books—a priceless source of information—that in the year 1414 the Queen of Sicily took up her abode at Angers, at Saumur and at Tours, with the "Comte de Ponthieu and her other children." In

February, 1416, the "King and Queen of Sicily, with Monsieur and Madame de Ponthieu," were in Paris, and they all had a narrow escape of being massacred by the people of the city. In 1417, Charles became Dauphin by the death of the second of his elder brothers, and in April of that year the husband of Yolande, and the father of Marie, Louis II of Anjou, died, forgiving all who had wronged him, and bidding his children make peace with the Duke of Burgundy; but with his last words advising Charles never to trust him.

Yolande was left regent for her young son Louis III, aged thirteen, and we find her actively engaged in defending Anjou and Maine against the English with the help of a subsidy of 30,000 francs from Charles, who as Dauphin is now in possession of Berry and Poitou. It was while Yolande was away in Provence, in the autumn of 1419, that the tragedy of the Bridge of Montereau occurred, when Jean sans Peur, Duke of Burgundy, was murdered by Tanneguy Duchatel, in the presence of the Dauphin, though without his orders. Isabelle of Bavaria took advantage of this unfortunate event to induce the new Duke of Burgundy, Philip the Good, to conclude with Henry V the infamous Treaty of Troyes, which the unhappy Charles VI was compelled to sign, without knowing that he thus deprived his son of his birthright. This was in May, 1420, and it was arranged that Catherine of France should marry the King of England, who received the title of Regent and presumptive heir of the throne. The Dauphin, declared unworthy to succeed, appealed to God and his sword.

But Henry V did not live long to enjoy his triumph; he died in 1422, and six weeks later was followed by the poor mad King, Charles VI. Never had the strong and

splendid kingdom of France fallen so low as in that dark hour, when a foreign foe was in possession of her most prized cities and strongholds, and the young son of the victorious Henry V was proclaimed King of England and of France. The reign of the hapless Charles VI had closed in ruin and disaster a year before the birth of Louis, his grandson, and Charles VII, the father of the new-born prince, was a foolish pleasure-seeking lad of twenty, too much guided by weak or evil counsellors, and fiercely opposed by most of his own kinsmen as well as his foreign enemies.

Charles, indeed, was called in contempt the "King of Bourges," for nearly all the provinces north of the Loire, as well as Guienne in the south, owned the sway of the invaders. The nominal reign of the hapless young King had begun in the most unfortunate manner, for his armies had been defeated again and again and the whole land was devastated and laid waste, at the mercy of a reckless and brutal soldiery. So black was the prospect that there seemed scarcely room for hope, yet the heart of the nation was still with the descendant of its ancient kings, and only awaited the clarion call which should summon the men of France to drive the alien from their soil.

From the memories of Louis XI in after days we gather that his was no happy childhood. We can picture the little Dauphin forlorn and neglected in those stately castles of Touraine, where the air was heavy with rumours of disaster which no wasteful feasts, and courtly games, and vain pleasures could lighten. In the speech reported by Chastellain which Louis made on his accession to the throne of France in 1461, at the age of thirty-eight, he says: "Only

yesterday I held myself to be the poorest son of a king that ever was, and one who *from my infancy* to the present day, have had nought but suffering and tribulation, poverty, anguish, and want. . . ."

In those early years after the accession of Charles VII, one disaster followed on the heels of another. In 1423, the Earl of Salisbury, after an obstinate battle, raised the siege of Cravant on the Yonne. The next year a great victory was won under the walls of Verneuil, after two days fighting, by the English, who thus gained possession of the county of Maine. Here the dark sky was pierced by one ray of light when the gallant young Duke of Alençon, taken prisoner, refused to purchase his liberty by agreeing to the shameful Treaty of Troyes. But the royalists had to grieve for their brave Scottish allies who were almost exterminated, for after the battle all of them who were taken prisoners were hung as rebels to their liege lord, the King of England. France was not ungrateful for their devotion, as the few who survived that fatal day were enlisted to form the Scots Guard, so famous in after time.

Encouraged by their success, the English under the Duke of Bedford, who was now master of nearly the whole territory north of the Loire, made a supreme effort to push southward. The provincial towns were gaining in strength and courage to resist the foe, and Montargis stood out bravely during a siege of three months, and then sent word to King Charles that they had no food or ammunition left. The Count of Dunois and La Hire set forth at once with about sixteen hundred men to the rescue, and on the way they met a priest, from whom La Hire begged absolu-

tion. He was naturally bidden to confess his sins first, but the rough captain replied: "I have no time, for I am in haste to attack the English; moreover, I have but done as all soldiers are wont to do."

The priest having unwillingly consented to this uncanonical act, La Hire knelt down by the wayside and prayed thus: "Mon Dieu, I beseech Thee to do this day for La Hire that which Thou wouldst have La Hire do for Thee, if he were God and Thou La Hire." With a conscience at rest, he then continued his journey, made a fierce onslaught on the English, and forced them to raise the siege of Montargis.

This was in 1427, and the following year the Duke of Bedford, at the head of an army of ten thousand men, marched towards Orleans, which was the key of Berry, Poitou, and the Bourbonnais, and whose possession would be of the highest importance for the coming campaign. The siege began in October, and the English, realizing how great an enterprise it was, lost no time in building a series of "fortilices" or small "bastiles" around, to prevent the arrival of any succour or provisions to the beleaguered city. All that winter the siege was carried on with great vigour, while the garrison, headed by the bravest "routiers," Dunois, La Hire, and others, made a stout resistance. The citizens formed themselves into thirty-four companies to defend the towers which stood out from the city walls, and they destroyed the suburbs, lest they should afford cover to the enemy. It is worthy of notice that artillery played a more important part in this siege than in any other in France, and the men of Orleans appear to have been better gunners than the English.

There were not wanting grim touches of sardonic

humour in the story we are told. Thus it is stated that one day during the pause for the midday meal, a lad from the town, who was strolling on the ramparts, found a cannon ready loaded and took it into his head to fire it. The ball shattered the iron casement of a tower window, from which the Earl of Salisbury was taking a survey of the fortifications, and he was mortally wounded by the fragments at the very moment when William Glasdale was saying to him, "My lord, you see your city."

Again, it so happened that at the beginning of Lent that brave soldier, Sir John Fastolf, was sent by Bedford in charge of a convoy of provisions, chiefly consisting of salt fish, for the use of the English army. The besieged heard of this, and resolved to intercept the convoy, but Fastolf astutely entrenched his men behind the wagons, and won the day, with a loss to the French of nearly five hundred men, who could ill be spared. This encounter was called the "Battle of Herrings," the fish being strewn in numbers over the field. The fall of Orleans now seemed to be inevitable.

We cannot pass by the name of Sir John Fastolf without a brief allusion to his gallant exploits in the French war, where he rose high in repute under Henry V. He fought at Agincourt with distinguished valour, was made Governor of Harfleur and Melans, Baron of France, and Knight of the Garter, and he captured the Duke of Alençon at the battle of Verneuil —a great prize, although Sir John never received the ransom due to him. On his one defeat at Patay, his splendid reputation was lost, and he became a scapegoat with the English people for the losses in France. Yet

this was not the worst which befell Sir John Fastolf, the Lord of Caistor Castle, the Privy Councillor of Henry VI, for if we accept the usual theory that he was the prototype of Shakespeare's Sir John Falstaff, what a fate was his, to be held up to ridicule through the ages, by the incomparable humour of so burlesque a travesty!

Charles VII was at last thoroughly roused from his indolent self-indulgence, if indeed his seeming recklessness may not have been the outward result of hopeless despondency. Yolande of Aragon—"ma bonne mère" as he always called her—had strained every nerve on his behalf. It was through her that Brittany was won to his cause by an alliance with Arthur de Richemont, brother of the Duke of Brittany, who had served the English cause, but had reason to be discontented with his foreign allies. He was made Constable of France and rendered invaluable help to the young King, who had been unfortunately led away by undeserving favourites, such as Louvet and La Tremouille. We can scarcely exaggerate the value of Yolande's influence over his unstable mind, and it is possible that his gentle Queen, Marie of Anjou—"jeune fille douce et intéressante," a model of all domestic virtues, deserves more credit than she has received.

It has been the custom of some historians to attribute the growing energy and spirit of Charles VII at this time to the patriotic counsels of Agnes Sorel, but in fact this lady did not enter into his story until some years later, when the tide of fortune had already turned, and hope reviving had taken the place of despair.

The dominion of foreigners had become each day

more hateful to the great mass of the French people, and they were moved by the appeal of the patriotic writer, Alain Chartier, who called upon the nobility, the clergy, and the bourgeois to unite in one last effort to save their country. Another singer, Olivier Basselin, thus encouraged his countrymen to drive out the enemy from their fatherland :—

"Entre vous, genz de village,
Qui aimez le roy Françoys,
Prenez chacun bon courage,
Pour combattre les Engloys.
Prenez chacun une houe
Pour mieux les desraciner.
. . . . .
Ne craignez point, allez battre
Ces *godons*, panches à poys,
Car un de nous en vault quatre,
Au moins en vault-il bien troys."

(Amongst you, ye village folk,
Who love the King of France;
Let each one take good courage
To fight against the English.
Let each one take a hoe
To root them out the better.
. . . . .
Do not fear, go forth and fight
Those "god-dens"[1] paunches full of peas,
For one of us is worth four of them,
Or at least is well worth three.)

Charles had appealed to the nobility and to the States-General and obtained the large sum of 100,000 crowns, but this seemed to have been spent in vain; and the King was hourly expecting news of the fall of his devoted city, when he would be driven from the central parts of France, and be compelled to retire into

[1] "Good-day," the common English salutation.

Dauphiné. It seemed as though a miracle alone could save his unfortunate country, and lo! at that very time the people of France came to believe that the miracle had indeed been granted to them.

In the month of March, 1429, the Court was at Chinon, on the banks of the River Vienne, in that wonderful old castle which still stands with its massive walls and huge towers stretched along a low ridge of rocky hill above the clear, swift river at its feet. There was a stir of interest amongst the gay lords and fine ladies, for the rumour had spread that a young woman from the borders of Lorraine had arrived with a mysterious message, and was to have an audience with the King. Strange stories had been told about this Jeanne d'Arc, who declared that she had a divine mission to relieve the city of Orleans and to conduct King Charles to Rheims to be crowned after the manner of his ancestors. There was a hush of curiosity as the young peasant girl, clad in a man's hose and doublet, and followed by her small escort, was led into the presence chamber, which remains to this day,—a great hall overlooking the river, with a massive chimney at one end,—all now in ruins, overgrown with straggling branches of wild rose.

In order to put Jeanne to the test, the young King stood undistinguished amongst the crowd of courtiers, but without a moment's hesitation she went straight to him and knelt at his feet. "Gentil Dauphin; God grant you a good life," she said. In vain he protested at first that he was not the King, then he asked what she wanted. "Gentil Dauphin [as she always called him before his coronation], I am Jeanne la Pucelle, and the King of Heaven bids me tell you that you

shall be anointed and crowned at Rheims, and shall be lieutenant for the King of Heaven, who is King of France." We are told that she then whispered a few words and added, "I tell you, in God's name, that you are true heir of France and son of the King."

To explain the point of this remark, it is needful to add that the mother of Charles, Isabelle of Bavaria, had come very young to the corrupt Court of France, and in after years her conduct had been so disgraceful as to throw doubts upon her son's legitimacy. In the Treaty of Troyes, signed by Isabelle herself, he was described as the "so-called Dauphin." We are told that Charles "was much amazed and very joyous" to hear Jeanne's assurance. After much strict questioning by priests and theologians and ladies of the Court, more especially Yolande of Aragon, who was a strong advocate of Jeanne from the first, the judgment was thus given: "Having heard all these reports, the King taking into consideration the great goodness which was in La Pucelle, and that she declared herself to be sent by God, it was by the said Seigneur and his council determined that from henceforward he would make use of her for his wars, since it was for this that she was sent."

Jeanne was next equipped for her perilous expedition, and it is noteworthy that the chief of her escort, Jean d'Aulon, and her confessor, Jean Pasquerel, both remained faithful to her until the end. She was clad in armour and carried her own chosen standard, for as she said in simple words, "she had no wish to use her sword and would kill no man."

The whole marvellous story of Jeanne d'Arc has been so often retold and is so well known that it will only be

needful briefly to refer to those striking events which must have filled the mind and dazzled the childish imagination of Louis the Dauphin. We follow her to the gates of Orleans with a regenerated army which has given up strong drink, violence, and sacrilegious oaths at the word of a young girl. We see her enter the city with a convoy of provisions and stores provided by Queen Yolande, who sold her county of Nice to supply the artillery which did such good service. As Jeanne rides through the streets in shining armour, mounted on a white charger, we do not wonder that she is greeted with acclamations as an avenging angel. During seven long months Orleans has been closely beleaguered, but within ten days of the arrival of La Pucelle, the siege is raised. The tide of success has indeed changed, for one victory follows another: Jargeau, Meung-sur-Loire, Beaugency, and Troyes are taken from the English, and the keys of Châlons are brought to Charles by the bishop. At length the crowning success was attained, and the King rode in triumph, with Jeanne d'Arc by his side, into the ancient city of Rheims for his solemn coronation, on the 16th of July, 1429. We are told that, outside the choir of the ancient cathedral that Saturday morning, Charles, in accordance with ancient custom, was presented by his nobles to the assembled people with the proclamation:—

"Here behold your King whom we the peers of France crown as King and sovereign lord. If there be one soul amongst you that would oppose it, let him speak and we will make answer to him. For to-morrow shall the King be consecrated by the grace of the Holy Spirit if you have nought to say against it." And the

people made answer with echoing cries of "Noël! Noël!"

The splendid pageant of the morrow, with gorgeous processions of armoured knights on horseback, of bishops in their richest robes, of peers and men-at-arms, and an excited populace, with banners waving and trumpets flaring, may well have left an indelible impression on the young Dauphin, who was old enough to know that all this greatness would one day be his. That eventful day was indeed an epoch in his life, for thereby his inheritance was assured to him; but the true heroine of that amazing triumph was the peasant girl from Domrémy, Jeanne la Pucelle, who had fulfilled her promise and knew that her work was done.

Orleans had been relieved in the hour of its dire extremity, the whole campaign of the Loire had been one long victory for the armies of France and a chain of disasters for the English invaders. The Earl of Suffolk had been taken at Jargeau, the brave Talbot was made prisoner at the battle of Patay, and so great and sudden had been the misfortunes of the army which a few months before had been assured of conquest, that the Regent Bedford was not alone in his belief in sorcery. Even amongst her own people there were many who misjudged poor Jeanne, and, strangely enough, the Church had always been disposed to look upon her with doubtful tolerance if not with actual hostility. "Give God the praise; but we know that this woman is a sinner," had been the attitude of certain bishops. From the day of the coronation a change was visible in the King and many of his counsellors, who felt a growing jealousy of the girl champion who had accomplished such mighty works.

Still, the people of France had been successfully roused, and the English steadily lost ground until they were driven from most of their northern provinces and the towns of Crécy, Provins, Coulommiers, and Chateau-Thierry expelled their foreign garrisons. Trusting to the patriotism of the citizens, the generals of Charles marched against Paris and made an attack upon the gate of St. Honoré, but they were repulsed, and turning back towards Compiègne they were successful in taking it after a long siege. The Duke of Burgundy in his turn besieged the town, and Jeanne d'Arc appears to have joined in the defence. She had long felt that her real mission was at an end, and had warned her friends that her death was near at hand, entreating their prayers on her behalf. On May 25, 1431, the fatal event took place during a sortie which she had led, when, either by mistake or treachery, the drawbridge was raised before she could re-enter the town, and she was compelled to yield herself a prisoner to a knight of the Duke of Burgundy. Jeanne was basely sold to the Duke of Bedford for 10,000 livres. No effort seems to have been made to save her on the part of the King who owed his crown to her, and, as we all know, the sad tragedy came to an end by the cruel death of the heroic maiden in the market-place of Rouen. She will ever remain enshrined one of the noblest characters in the history of the land she loved so well, and for whose sake she freely gave her life—brave and pure as any of the army of martyrs.

The death of Jeanne d'Arc did not improve the position of the English; for although the young Henry VI was crowned in Paris on December 17, the same year, 1431, the ceremony was shorn of all

significance by the absence of all the French nobles, and the want of all the magnificence and the usual "largesse" and royal generosity on such occasions. A still more serious matter was that the Duke of Burgundy was growing weary of his foreign allies whom he had served so well without receiving any return from them. He had never forgiven the remark of the Duke of Bedford when it was suggested in 1429 that Orleans should be placed as a neutral city in the hands of Phillip, that "il serait bien marry d'avoir battu les buissons et que d'autres eussent les oisillons." Moreover, on the death of Anne of Burgundy, the wife of Bedford, in 1432, he had hastened to marry a daughter of the Count of Saint-Pol, without even consulting his former brother-in-law. Duke Philip felt these affronts bitterly, and was also well aware that his alliance with England was very unpopular in his own land.

It was fortunate for the cause of Charles VII that about this time he was induced to dismiss the most unworthy and guilty of his favourites, La Tremouille, and to take back into his favour the Constable of Richemont, whose talents as a politician equalled his courage as a soldier. Everybody was weary of the long disastrous war, and in 1435 a general conference was held at Arras to consider the terms of peace. There were ambassadors from all the states of Europe—the Pope Eugenius IV, the Emperor Sigismund, the Kings of Castile, Aragon, Portugal, Navarre, Sicily, Naples, Cyprus, Poland, and Denmark, while the large towns and the University of Paris sent their delegates. The King of England was represented by the Cardinal of Winchester and a goodly company

of barons; the King of France sent the Constable of Richemont and eighteen nobles, and the Duke of Burgundy appeared in person.

England demanded only a *truce* and the marriage of Henry VI with one of the daughters of Charles VII. At this time there were three princesses living, all younger than Louis—Catherine, Jeanne, and the baby Yolande. The French Ambassador refused anything but a permanent *peace*, on the understanding of Henry giving up all pretensions to the throne of France and to the provinces which he still occupied. These terms were rejected with contempt, and the Cardinal of Winchester announced his intention of at once leaving the council and returning with his company to England.

The Pope's envoys appear to have used their influence with Philip of Burgundy, who having received news of the death of the Duke of Bedford, and the expected end of Queen Isabelle of Bavaria, felt himself released from his former engagements, and was willing to make peace with France. Charles VII was compelled to consent to most humiliating conditions, as he, first, had to declare that Duke Jean-sans-peur was unjustly slain and that all who took part in his murder were to be exiled from France. Next he was to yield up the countships of Auxerre and Macon, the towns of Roye, Péronne, and Mont-Didier as well as those in the valley of the Somme, besides 400,000 gold crowns. On these terms the Treaty of Arras was signed, independently of England. By way of compensation, Charles VII was now master of Paris, for the citizens threw open to him the gate of Saint Jacques on the 29th of May, 1436. There was still an English force of fifteen

thousand men under Lord Willoughby, who, after vainly endeavouring to defend Paris, shut themselves up within the fortress of the Bastille.

This was a frequent occurrence in medieval times, and as in this case, it was often a very difficult matter for the conquerors of a city to obtain possession of the citadel. Richemont had no ammunition or artillery sufficiently powerful to take the fortress by assault, although he would thereby have obtained a rich booty from the ransom of the numerous noblemen who were serving with the English army. The Constable was therefore compelled to accept the terms offered by Lord Willoughby—that he and his army might depart with the honours of war, and all their possessions, in the company of all the Frenchmen who had joined them. When these conditions were granted to them, they gave up the Bastille to Richemont, marched out of Paris by the gate of Saint Antoine, embarked in boats on the Seine, and made their retreat safely to Rouen. The old Queen Isabelle of Bavaria died in Paris, wretched and deserted, three days later.

The taking of the capital may be said to end the first part of the reign of Charles VII, who from this time, under the advice of wiser counsellors, such as the famous Jacques Cœur, his banker (argentier), Jean Bureau, Master of the Artillery, and others, showed himself more worthy of his high position. He was fortunate in his generals, for Chabannes, Dunois, La Hire, Xaintrailles, Pierre and Jean de Brezé served him with courage and skill on the battlefield. It is worthy of note as showing a new departure, that almost all of these men belonged either to the bourgeois class or to the "petite noblesse"; indeed, the only real member

of the "noblesse" in the King's council was the Count of Richemont. We shall see this policy carried on in future to a much greater extent.

Charles made his entry into Paris with great pomp and magnificence, and the citizens received him with the utmost enthusiasm, hailing him as Charles "the Victorious," on his return to the capital of his ancestors after an absence of eighteen years.

CHAPTER II

LOUIS THE DAUPHIN

1436-45

MARGARET OF SCOTLAND AND HER FATHER, JAMES I—MARRIAGE OF THE DAUPHIN—HIS LETTERS—CHARLES OF ORLEANS—THE DAUPHIN LEADS THE "ÉCORCHEURS" OUT OF FRANCE—BATTLE OF ST. JACQUES—REFORM OF THE ARMY.

IT is after the recovery of Paris in the year 1436 that we first find mention of Louis the Dauphin being definitely associated with the affairs of the kingdom. Already in 1428 his father had begun to look upon him as a valuable political asset, for in that year he first formed the idea of an alliance with Scotland by the marriage of the Dauphin with the daughter of James I of Scotland. He appears to have sent over an important embassy for that purpose, consisting of the Archbishop of Rheims, John Stewart, Darnley Constable of the Scots in France, and the famous man of letters, Alain Chartier. At that time the children were both too young for more than a betrothal to take place, but decisive arrangements were made for the future.

At this point it is very interesting to trace the strong friendship which had so long existed between France and Scotland, and which was founded to a great extent on their mutual jealousy and hatred of England. James I had just cause to rue it, for he was being sent to be

ducated in France in the year 1405, that he might scape the fate of his elder brother, starved to death y his uncle Albany, when he fell into the hands of Henry IV. Accompanied by some Scotch noblemen, he young Prince had set sail from the Bass Rock at the nouth of the Frith of Forth, and meeting with rough veather, was driven on the English coast. Although t the time there was a truce between the two countries, ames was taken by some Norfolk sailors, who brought heir prize to the English King. The Scottish lad had een provided by his father with letters to King Henry o be used in case of his landing in England, but these vere of no service to him. Henry IV sarcastically remarked that if the Scots had been friendly they would ave sent the boy to him for his education, as he knew he French language quite as well as Charles VI of rance.

The news of this disaster was fatal to his father, Robert III, and the government of Scotland now fell nto the hands of the Duke of Albany, who was by o means anxious for the release of his nephew, and ames remained for many years a captive in England. He received an excellent education, and spent many of is long hours of leisure in writing verse of much harm and interest, such as the "King's Qhuair," a love oem addressed to the Lady Jane, his future bride. There is also preserved a poem of his in lighter vein, Christ's Kirk on the Green."

In the year 1421, after sixteen years of captivity, Henry V took the Scottish King with him to France, aving made a private treaty that in return for help in is campaign he would give him his freedom. James as required to use his authority in forbidding the

Scots in France from fighting against the English, but they would not listen to a captive sovereign. He took part in the siege of Dreux, which surrendered to him. Henry V died at Vincennes before he could fulfil his promise, but some years later, in 1423, when the ambitious Duke of Albany had also passed away, James was at length set free after an unjust imprisonment of eighteen years. He was to agree to a treaty by which the kings of England and Scotland were forbidden to take part with the enemies of each other; and had to pay a ransom of £40,000. In order the more strongly to cement the friendship with England, he was suffered to marry the Lady Jane Beaufort, sister of the Duke of Somerset and a cousin germain of his own, through their common descent from John of Gaunt. He had already formed a romantic attachment for this lady, and a pretty story is told of his falling in love with the fair damsel, seen by chance from his prison window in the keep of Windsor. Some of the poet-king's most charming lyrics are written in homage to the lady of his devotion. Much interest and sympathy were felt in England when the wedding of the princely lovers took place with great splendour on the 11th of February, 1423, and the sum of 10,000 marks was given as a dower with the Lady Jane, to be deducted from the promised ransom.

The promise of brighter days appeared to be realized for awhile, when the King and Queen of Scotland were received with acclamation and crowned on May 21, 1423, in the land from which he had so long been an exile, and within a year their daughter Margaret was born. As the destined wife of Louis XI, it is her story which most concerns us, and we hear that the little princess

was brought up in the cultivated Court of her father with the most careful and learned education. When she had barely reached the age of twelve, this peaceful happy time came to an end, for she had to abide by the usual fate of royal ladies in those days. James was called upon to fulfil his engagement with the King of France, and send his cherished daughter away from him for ever, to a foreign land, to be the bride of the Dauphin Louis XI, a boy not much older than herself.

It was in 1436 that poor little Margaret said good-bye to her parents and set forth from Dumbarton with a gallant escort on her voyage to France. There was a truce with England at the time, but the Regent, Richard Duke of York, could not resist the temptation of sending an expedition to kidnap the young princess. However, the captains of the fleet were ever ready to do a little piracy on their own account, and when they met with some vessels from the Netherlands laden with wine, they thought to make sure of their booty on the way. But the sea at that moment must have been a much frequented highway, for no sooner was the wine in possession of the English before a Spanish fleet passed by, lost no time in giving battle, and carried off the spoil. The Scots bore the Princess Margaret safely into the port of La Rochelle pursued by English cruisers, but the entrance of the roads was closed in time by the help of some Castilian auxiliaries, of the embassy of Don Enrique.

Margaret was received with the usual pomp at Tours where she arrived on June 14, and the marriage with the Dauphin was celebrated by the Archbishop of Rheims in the chapel of the Château, on the day of Saint John. A shadow was cast over the court by the

recent death of the baby-prince Philippe, one of the many children of Queen Marie who scarcely survived their infancy. Of the young Scotch bride, barely twelve years old, Monstrelet tells us that she was "une princesse parfaite aux beautés de l'âme et du corps."

The marriage between the two children was apparently a failure. It must always be a great risk to bring together in such intimate connection, with no choice of their own, two young creatures, absolute strangers to each other, aliens in race and training, who have been surrounded by greatly different influences from their birth, and who do not even speak the same language. There are, of course, great historical instances where such early marriages have been a success, as in the case of that most attractive figure of the Italian Renaissance, Vittoria Colonna and her young husband the Marquess of Pescara. But then, she was one of those rare and exquisite creatures who are all compact of bright intelligence and tender love and sympathy.

Gentle and charming as the Princess Margaret is represented to us, she may not have been able to conceal a feeling of contempt for the French boy, who certainly cared nothing for the poetry and romance which had been the very atmosphere of her life. Louis, on his side, had excellent practical common sense, a keen knowledge of facts and numbers, and a passionate love of warlike pursuits, outdoor games, and, above all, of hunting and falconry. To judge from his later character, we may without injustice suppose him to have been a somewhat unamiable child, cold in disposition, obstinately set upon having his own way, violent if opposed, of precocious sharpness, and already an

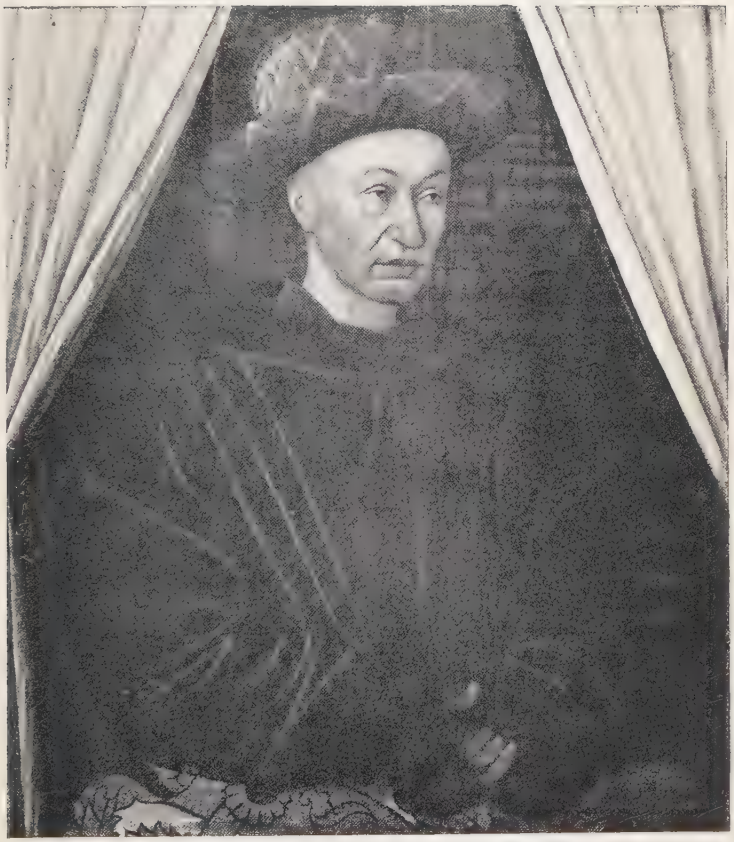


Photo by Levy et ses fils, Paris

CHARLES VII, KING OF FRANCE

After the portrait by JEAN FOUCQUET

To face p. 24

adept in dissimulation, the protective armour of one who is in the midst of doubtful friends and secret foes. He was indignant at this marriage, forced upon him so early, by which his father had asserted control over his future life. Yet even on this subject, as with everything else which touches upon the character of Louis XI, it is extremely difficult to find out the truth. Most writers have so strong a *parti pris* against him that, like the villain of a melodrama, his appearance on the stage is at once the signal for hisses and execration. At every step, therefore, great caution and consideration is needed in the interest of historical accuracy. Commines tells us that "Louis regretted the existence of this princess during the whole of her life"; but then, he had no personal knowledge on the subject, and all this happened long before his time. On the other hand, André Duchesne assures us that "Louis had much love for the Princess Margaret"; Legeay calls it a "ménage fort uni," and Père Anselme says that the Dauphin after her death "had a strong desire to marry one of her sisters." Still we can quite believe that they were ill-matched, and had few tastes or sympathies in common. The Scotch Princess loved to sit up through the long hours of the night writing poetry, while the boy Louis, tired with the day's hunting, probably went to bed at a very early hour.

Charles and his son were too different in temperament and character to be friends and companions, and yet too near in age for the unquestioning obedience of the younger to paternal authority, more especially as Louis at the age of thirteen would be almost a match in intellect for his father at thirty-three. There was always a certain rivalry between them which did not conduce

to affection. On the other hand, Charles showed from the first a strong liking for the gentle Margaret, and it is very interesting to find in the royal account book the following description of the New Year's gift which he bestowed upon her in 1437, the year after her marriage: "A madame la dauphine, le premier jour de l'an, . . . un miroir d'or à pié garni de perles dont le roy lui a fait présent pour ses estrennes." This golden mirror adorned with pearls "with feet" was probably of large size—a splendid present. To monsieur le dauphin he gave, at the same time, six yards of cloth of gold.

It was only a few months later that Margaret received the awful news of her father's cruel murder at Perth in the Abbey of the Black Friars, on February 20, 1437. This tragedy, one of the blackest in history, must have been enough to crush the tender heart of his loving daughter, so far away that she had not even the faint consolation of being with her bereaved mother in that sad hour. Only one ray of light stands out in that ghastly story — the heroic devotion of Catherine Douglas, who thrust her arm across the door to delay the traitors, in place of the bar which had been removed.

It was an evil day for Scotland, and a fierce retribution overtook the rebellious and guilty lords before the young brother of Margaret, a boy of six years old, was crowned at Holyrood under the title of James II.

We wonder whether, in her deep affliction, the poor young Dauphiness found any comfort in the use of a "chapelle portative" which Louis had just bought, "garnie de chalice d'argent doré, deux buretez, une paix d'argent, ung messel, les trois nappes, l'aube,

l'amit, la chasuble de drap d'or, l'autel et contre autel de mesmez drap d'or," the whole costing 210 livres tournois, and for which the receipt is signed by the Dauphin's confessor, Jean Majoris. This was certainly an unusual purchase for a lad of fourteen.

It was towards the end of the year 1436 that Louis the Dauphin, at the age of thirteen, began to accompany his father in his travels and wars. The Duke of Bedford had died in 1435, and the new Regent, Richard Duke of York, although he was appointed too late to save Paris to the English, showed great activity and retook many towns and castles before he was recalled at the end of the year to give place to Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick. Charles VII and his son had plenty of scope for their warlike energy in Languedoc, Poitou, and Dauphiné, and the next year they were present together at the siege of Montereau. With the date of 1438 begin the extremely interesting letters of Louis, Dauphin—"lettres missives" written by him before he became king in 1461, of which one hundred and twenty-six have been preserved. Besides this, there are one hundred other documents of the same period which the learned archivist, M. Etienne Charavay, calls "Pièces justificatives," and which have been chosen by him from a large number as most characteristic of the Dauphin's personality. All these will help to illustrate fully this most eventful and less-known period of his life.

In 1439 we find the King showing so much confidence in his young son that he appoints him as "royal and extraordinary commissioner" in Languedoc, Poitou, and Saintonge, "pour oster les pil-

leries et faire vuidier les gens de guerre qui estoient en icellui" (to put an end to the pillaging and turn out the men of war who were in those parts). Charles VII, in his letters, gives full powers to "nostre très chier et très amé filz Loys, daulphin de Viennois," to put an end to the "pilleries, roberies, rebellions et désobeissances, abuz de justice, tors, griefz, exactions et autres crimes et maléfices commis et perpetrez en nosdiz pais. . . ." There was, indeed, a call for strong measures, as it is almost impossible for us to realize the utter misery and fearful condition of the country so long ravaged and laid desolate by constant war and rapine. France, at this time, was overrun by robber bands, "écorcheurs," literally flayers, brutal wretches who not only waylaid and plundered their victims, but actually stripped them of their clothes, leaving them almost naked. No rank or condition was safe from these marauders, who openly defied the Government.

This appears to have been one development of the awful plague of foreign mercenaries, who, when not engaged in actual warfare, lived by rapine, pillage, and massacre of the hapless peasantry and others. We shall have occasion to give fuller details later—at the period of Charles VII's master-stroke of policy against the "routiers" and "écorcheurs."

We have a full account of all the preparations made for this expedition to Languedoc, which marks a most important epoch by a new system of reform in the administration of the realm. The States-General at Orleans were induced, in October, 1439, to vote a subsidy of 1,200,000 livres to pay a regular body of *gendarmerie*, thus placing the armed forces of

the kingdom under the immediate control of the King. This was a stroke of genius of which we cannot overestimate the importance. Amongst minor details it is curious to notice in the letters that the Dauphin makes large gifts in money to all the important members of his company, and that splendid apparel is ordered for Louis by his father. We read of "two long robes of cloth of gold lined with marten skins, one robe of crimson velvet and another of the richest black-velvet also lined with marten skins," and of large payments made to a merchant of Toulouse for velvet and crimson satin, "destinés à confectionner des vêtements pour monseigneur le dauphin." Evidently he is to make up by magnificence for the dignity which may be wanting to a prince of sixteen. Louis writes a very stately and courteous letter to the Seneschal of Beaucaire expressing his earnest wish that all the nobles of Languedoc may join him in his expedition, but at the same time insisting that they are in no way to "be forced or constrained to do so."

Both France and England had grown very weary of the long disastrous war, and the young King, Henry VI, whose gentle nature made him long for peace, was eager to take the advice of Cardinal Beaufort, and as means to this end to set free Charles Duke of Orleans, who had been a captive in England ever since the battle of Agincourt, 1415. It was hoped that he would have much influence at the Court of France and might smooth the way for an agreement between the two nations. Humphrey Duke of Gloucester strongly opposed this measure, and was so indignant at being overruled that he abruptly left the council and departed in his barge. The Duke of Orleans was

required to take oath never to bear arms against England, and he was to pay a ransom of 60,000 crowns, of which part was to be excused if he was successful in making peace.

When the Dauphin Louis heard of these negotiations, he at once generously offered on his honour to pay 30,000 "saluts d'or" (equal to French écus of gold, 25 sols tournois) towards this ransom of "nostre très chier et très amé oncle le duc d'Orleans, prisonnier de Henry, soy disant roy d'Angleterre, adversaire de Monseigneur et de nous . . . pour pourchacier sa delivrance. . . ." This letter, written in December, 1439, is one of the earliest instances of the life-long policy of Louis, who, parsimonious to a degree in all that concerned his own private expenditure, showed a princely liberality in all public matters, pensions, bribes, etc.

The story of Charles Duke of Orleans somewhat resembles that of James I, but his was a captivity of five-and-twenty years since that day of Agincourt when he was drawn forth alive from beneath a ghastly heap of murdered prisoners. Charles was the son of Louis Duke of Orleans, who was stabbed in the streets of Paris in November, 1407, by the instigation of Jean Duke of Burgundy, a crime which had the terrible consequences of a vendetta. His mother was Valentina Visconti, the rightful heir of the Visconti family and Milan, whose rights, transmitted to the House of Orleans, prepared the way for the disastrous interference of foreign princes in Italian politics. She died of a broken heart for the loss of a husband who had never returned her love. When Charles succeeded to his father's title his whole heart was set on revenging

that treacherous murder, and he strengthened his party by marriage with Bonne, a daughter of the Count of Armagnac; for his young wife, the Princess Isabelle of France, was dead. This private feud soon became national, and for many years divided the north and south of France into hostile factions: the young head of the House of Orleans, now fighting by the Gascon's side, now making alliances only to break them, but ever a menace to the peace of his country throughout all his turbulent youth. Then came the disaster of Agincourt, and the stirring turmoil of camp and court is changed for the peace and solitude of prison life. For nearly eight years he must have been prisoner at the same time as the young James I, and both of them whiled away the long hours of captivity with the making of verse. The dreamy sentimental poetry of Charles has a certain merit of its own and has found a place in the literature of his time.

But as time passed on and one after another of his fellow prisoners was ransomed and went home, he became more troubled and restless; he found the English climate "prejudicial to the human frame," he disliked English fruit and beer, and even the fires of coal. All his thoughts turned towards freedom, and when the chance came to him, it was with all his heart that he promised to work for peace if he might once more return to his native land. He was received with enthusiasm on his return as the type of all that was most chivalrous and patriotic. But there was nothing heroic about this middle-aged man who came back as the avowed friend of Philip of Burgundy, and expected to take up his life again where it was broken off twenty-five years before, with all its princely pomp and dis-

play. Only a fortnight after his arrival he was married at St. Omer to Mary of Clèves, a young princess barely fifteen years old, of no great personal attraction. After the usual gorgeous entertainments and feasting, the Duke and Duchess travelled on through Ghent and Tournay, while all the towns through which he passed gave him offerings of money towards the payment of his ransom, and people thronged to his service as though he had been the King of France. Followed by a troop of Burgundian nobles he went to Paris, where King Charles VII offered to receive him with a smaller retinue, at which the Duke took offence and retreated through Touraine, where he was warmly welcomed, to his castle at Blois.

Here we may leave him for a while to his life of courtly ease and pleasure, in the midst of a gay company who listened to his verses, played chess and other aristocratic games, went hunting and hawking, and made the pursuit of pleasure a serious study. He was fond of travelling, and would occasionally make a stately progress to visit King René of Provence at Tarascon, or to the King of France when some great tournament was going on. On these occasions the Duchess Marie and the Dauphine Margaret would find much in common, and lend each other romances, but their brief friendship was severed in 1445 by the death of Margaret. It was not until many years later that there was born to Marie of Clèves, Duchess of Orleans, the little son who later succeeded to the throne of France under the title of Louis XII.

We must now return to the year 1440, when Louis the Dauphin, after successfully carrying out the King's commission in Languedoc, lost his head and most un-

wisely consented to head the rebellion against the throne, called the "Praguerie." It was a combination of the great nobles, the Dukes of Bourbon and Alençon, the Counts of Dunois and Vendôme and others, and the chief leaders of the "routiers," such as Antoine and Jacques de Chabannes, Jean Sangliers, and Jean de la Roche. Their chief cause of complaint was the King's levy of the *Gendarmerie* which was absolutely under his command, and left both the feudal lords and the mercenaries out in the cold. But Charles had on his side the whole of the *bourgeoisie* and the peasants, and the revolt was soon crushed. Louis hastened to make due submission, and we find that in 1440 the county of Dauphiné is assigned to him, and he sends his chamberlain and *maître d'hôtel* to take possession of it. He shows his practical talent for business by at once making the most minute inquiries with regard to the money and coinage of Dauphiné; there are several letters of his on the subject, evidently understanding all about the "monnaie royale et monnaie delphinale."

The next mission of the Dauphin appears to us most amazing and almost incredible, for it was nothing less than to "débarrasser la France des grandes compagnies, en les emmenant guerroyer contre les Suisses . . ." The Dauphin was to rid France of these "grandes compagnies," the immense companies of mercenary ruffians who, when not actually fighting for pay, ravaged and destroyed the land which harboured them. The curious point was the way in which this was done, for they were to be gathered together into one army and led away out of France to fight against the Swiss and thus if possible to be destroyed, or in any case to

be left behind! A desperate remedy indeed for an intolerable state of things.

All the chronicles of the period are full of the horrors committed on defenceless people by these lawless bands; they were beyond all restraint, and the only answer made to the most pitiable complaint was: "Il faut qu'ils vivent." A few instances may give a faint idea of the misery endured. In the *Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris* we have under the date of 1423: "Item. Vint ung grant compagnie de larrons qui se disaient Arminaz ou de la bande, ausquels rien, s'il n'estoit trop chaulx ou trop pesant, ne leur eschappoit, et qui pis est, tuoient, boutoient feu, efforcoient femmes et filles, pendoient, s'ils ne payoient rançon à leur guise, ne marchandise nulle par là ne pouvoit eschapper. . . ."

(There came a great company of robbers who called themselves Armagnacs, or "of the band," from whom nothing, unless it was too hot or too heavy, escaped, and what is worse, they killed, set fire, ill-used women and girls, hung those who would not pay ransom to their fancy. No merchandise could escape.)

Thus was the land made desolate, houses burnt, cattle and every living creature carried away, the corn cut, everything destroyed, and the wretched survivors driven to take refuge in the towns and beg at the church doors. Can we wonder that the next entry in that Journal is the following?:

"Item. 1423. En ce temps venoient à Paris les loups touttes les nuits, et en prenoit-on souvent trois ou quatre à ungne fois, et estoient portez parmy Paris pendus par les piés de derrière, et leur donnoit-on de l'argent grant foison (à ceux qui les avoient pris)."

(At that time the wolves came to Paris every night, and three or four were often taken at one time, and were carried through Paris hung by their hind feet, and much money was given to those who had taken them.)

No class was exempt from the depredations of the "routiers." We find a certain Jaquin de Nicey, "escuier," of Longeance, complain that his house and estate had been ravaged, "despouillée sa femme toute nue par deux fois," all his goods, furniture, cattle, etc., carried away. Poor widows complained that after their husbands had been ransomed, they were murdered. We find another pathetic deposition of a poor man.

"Item. Ledit Jacquemin a dit et jurey que les routiers emmenèrerent ung sien fils en l'eage de X ans, onques plus ne le vit, et non puet oir nouvelles, et le voiroit bien ravoir pour la somme de XL florins. . . ."

(The said Jaquemin has said and sworn that the "routiers" carried away his own son of the age of ten years, and he has never seen him since and can hear no news of him, and would desire indeed to have him back if he gave the sum of forty florins. . . .)

Little children were constantly taken away and held to ransom for some amount far beyond their parents' means. Villages were burnt, churches robbed and destroyed, at fairs and markets every one was pillaged.

As time passed, matters grew worse, and when the marriage of Henry VI, King of England, and Marguerite of Anjou was in contemplation, a truce was made for eighteen months, the army of adventurers was left unemployed, and the country was in a desperate extremity. We gain some idea of this from the *Journal d'un Bourgeois* :—

"Item. 1444. A l'entrée de Juillet vint une grande compagnie de larrons et de murdriers qui se logèrent ès villaiges qui sont au tour de Paris . . . nul homme n'osoit aller aux champs, ne venir à Paris, ne osoit cuillir aux champs quelque chose que ce fust . . . nulle beste prinse, fust asne, vache ou pourcel, qui ne fust plus rançonné qu'il ne valloit . . . ne homme de quelque estat qu'il fust, fust moyne, prestre ne religieux . . . fust menestrel, fust herault, fust femme ou enfant de quelque eage, que s'il yssoit (sortait) de Paris qui ne fust en grand peril de sa vie, mais se on ne luy ostait sa vie, il estoit despouillé tout nu, tous sans ung seul exceptez. . . ."

(At the beginning of July there came a great company of robbers and murderers, who lodged in the villages round Paris . . . no man dared go to the fields, nor come to Paris, nor dared gather anything in the fields . . . no beast was taken, be it ass, nor cow nor pig, which was not put to ransom for more than it was worth . . . nor man of what condition he might be, monk or priest or friar . . . were he minstrel, herald, or woman, or child of any age, who if he went out of Paris was not in great peril of his life, and even if he did not lose his life he was stripped naked, etc. . . .)

The time had come when it was a matter of life and death to set the land free from these "écorcheurs." The Dauphin had already shown his mettle by leading an army of them in August, 1443, to raise the siege of Dieppe, which was attacked by Lord Talbot. But now a far more difficult task was before him, as he received a royal mandate bidding him collect and master all these undisciplined soldiers from the open country, and

a certain number of those in garrisons, and lead them forth on a great expedition out of the country. It so happened that the House of Austria had begged for help in a war against the Swiss, and Charles VII eagerly seized the occasion to carry out his desperate undertaking.

While getting rid of these redoubtable companies who troubled the peace of France, the King gave scope to the feverish activity of his son; "cet esprit rémuant qui le poussait volontiers à se jeter dans les aventures." In fact, the perilous expedition suited him exactly.

Charles VII sent orders everywhere that if the "routiers" who made part of the Dauphin's army left him or went astray, they were to be punished with exemplary rigour. We are amazed to find that he scarcely hid his purpose. In writing to the inhabitants of Rheims, he spoke of sending away the men of war so that they might no more return to our land . . . to purge the soil of France without exposing to massacre those who might seek to drive them out."

At length the great army of *gens terribles*, *ce grand troupeau de voleurs*, set forth, in number about 30,000 at a rough estimate, including a number of hangers-on and camp-followers of the vilest kind. All countries were represented, and each company was led by its own captain—French, Lombard, Gascon, Breton, English, Scotch, Spanish, etc.—and the Dauphin Louis, a lad of twenty-one, was at the head, with a suite of nobles round him. The passage of this devouring multitude was a fearful experience for those eastern provinces, and we cannot wonder that it spread dismay and terror on every side. Philip Duke of Burgundy

made haste to send Louis a present of fifteen queues[1] of the best wine to conciliate him. Frederick III of Austria inquired why so great an army of barbarians had come. He began to dread his allies more than his enemies.

The mighty horde reached the neighbourhood of Basel, and there, almost within sight of the fathers of Christendom who were holding a council, was fought the great battle of Saint Jacques, on the 26th August, 1444. A handful of Swiss fought with heroic courage, until overwhelmed by numbers, on the banks of the river Birse, and never were men known to sell their lives so dearly. We are told that some of the conquering host sought refuge that evening at the castle of Jean de Thierstein, and the warder asked what they wanted so late. "Nous avons lutté et combattu tout ce jour!" replied the trumpeter. "Qui est vaincu?" was shouted from the battlements. "Les Suisses sont défaits," was the answer. "Combien des vôtres sont morts?" "Jusqu'à quatre mille," was the trumpeter's estimate.

Where was the Dauphin? has been one of the contested points of history. But we have clear evidence that Louis went to the Château of Waltighoffen on the Sunday before the battle and remained there until the Thursday after. Two friars went to him there from Basel imploring pity for the city. Indeed, deputations arrived from all quarters, and he was able to make his own terms, so great was the alarm inspired by this terrible invasion. But the fighting continued, and at the siege of Dambach, the Prince was wounded in the knee by an arrow, and had to be carried from thence to Chatenois and afterwards to Ensisheim

[1] Queue, a muid and half a muid of corn, fifty bushels.

(Haut Rhin). Charles VII appears to have felt much anxiety about his son, as we gather from numerous letters.

"Le Roi de France informé de cet accident en éprouva un tel vif chagrin, il ne put dès lors goûter un instant de repos et fut en proie à des angoisses continuelles, croyant son fils dejà mort. Il lui envoya messages sur messages, lettres sur lettres, le pressant de revenir sans delai auprès de sa personne, si les jours de son père lui etaient chers, parceque ce père ne ressentirait de joie que lorsqu'il pourrait se rencontrer face de face avec son fils."

The Dauphin concluded a treaty with the Swiss on the 28th of October, while still at Ensisheim, and it was from this town that he wrote a most indignant letter to the councillors of Burgundy. He complained that after leaving Montébliard, the garrisons of Langres and Lure not "only closed their gates and refused to admit him and his followers, but left them outside in the fields in danger and would sell them no provisions for gold or silver, to his great discontent." It was not until almost the end of the year that he returned to his father, taking only an escort of two thousand horsemen, while the rest of the army was left in winter quarters, provided with food and lodging at the expense of the unfortunate people of Alsace. All the cities of the Empire were naturally up in arms against the "routiers," and horrified at the departure of the Dauphin whose authority had kept them somewhat in order.

During the winter there were serious negotiations between France and the Empire with regard to the evacuation of Alsace, which was treated like a con-

quered country. The audacity of the captains left at Ensisheim actually went so far that they put up the city for auction! At length the down-trodden people appear to have risen in despair against their devouring foes. Five hundred determined volunteers awaited the passage of an army through the Val de Liepvre by a narrow pass where two cavaliers could hardly go abreast. They remained in ambush until the critical moment and then rushing forth won a great victory, the "routiers" being almost entirely destroyed. An immense quantity of plunder was taken: a quantity of precious plate and articles of value, 60,000 florins, 1416 fine horses, and other booty. This happened on March 18, 1445, and so great a success encouraged others to follow the example. Scattered bands of the invaders were attacked and cut in pieces, so that we are told by the end of April Alsace was free. The public records of the time contain a long list of remissions or pardons for people who by one means or another had got rid of the "écorcheurs." So this amazing adventure came to an end. In the following year, on July 17, 1445, Louis writes to "his very dear and well-beloved churchmen, bourgeois, and inhabitants of the town of Senlis" to ask for their contributions towards the expense of this undertaking.

"De par le daulphin de Viennois,

"Très chiers et bien amés, vous savez assez comment par le bon plaisir et voulenté de Monseigneur en la saison passée avons fait widier et mettre hors de ce royaume en *grant danger de notre personne* tous les capitaines, routiers et autres gens de guerre espandus en icellui à la foule et totale destruction des pays de

mondit seigneur, et iceulx menez et fait vivre par longue saison ou pais delemaigne à ce que les pilleries poussent cesser et le povre peuple et subgiez de mondit seigneur demourer et vivre seurement. . . ."

(Very dear and well-beloved, you know how, by the good pleasure and will of Monseigneur [the King], during the past season we have cleared and put out of the kingdom, to the great danger of our person, all the captains, "routiers," and other men of war spread about here to the . . . and total destruction of the lands of my aforesaid seigneur, and have led them out and caused them to live for a long season in the country of Germany in order that the robberies may cease and the poor people and subjects of my aforesaid seigneur may abide and live safely. . . .")

He then continues to explain how very expensive this has been, and asks for a grant of what money the town can afford.

This letter was at once read at a public meeting in the Hôtel de Ville of Senlis. After this letter had been written in the registers, this was added: "It has been concluded that for the great love and affection which the town bears to Monseigneur the Dauphin . . . the town gave him the sum of IIII^{xx} livres tournois, to be paid at the Saint Martin this coming winter."

Most of the "écorcheurs" being thus got rid of in this extraordinary and certainly, as Louis says, dangerous way, Charles was free to carry out his scheme of reform. The French army was reduced to fifteen companies of one hundred lances, each lance including the man-at-arms, his page, three archers and one *coutillier* (retainer of lower rank), all mounted. A few years later the French infantry was thus created. Every

parish in the kingdom was required to provide a foot soldier well armed and accoutred, who was to be trained every fête-day, and was to serve the King when needful, at the pay of four francs a month when on duty. These sixteen thousand men were called "francs archers," and although at first they were much laughed at by satirists like the poet Villon, before many years they distinguished themselves on all the battlefields of the Continent.

It is interesting to know that some of the best of the old *routiers* who had been left in France on garrison work, were very anxious to join the King's *compagnies d'ordonnance*, and they proved most valuable soldiers under strict discipline.

CHAPTER III

LOUIS THE DAUPHIN

1445–61

MARGUERITE OF ANJOU MARRIES HENRY VI—DEATH OF MARGARET LA DAUPHINE—QUEEN MARIE AND AGNÈS SOREL—DEPARTURE OF THE DAUPHIN FROM COURT—HIS LIFE IN DAUPHINÉ—HIS MARRIAGE WITH CHARLOTTE OF SAVOY—JACQUES CŒUR—LOUIS RETIRES TO BURGUNDY—HIS LIFE AT GENAPPE.

THE young King of England, Henry VI, who had chiefly received his political education from his uncle, Cardinal Beaufort, was of a gentle and pious disposition, with an ardent desire for peace. He was quite ready to listen to the suggestion of one of his advisers, William de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, who urged upon him a marriage with Marguerite, the daughter of René of Anjou, as a means towards putting an end to the long war with France. On the other hand, the Duke of Gloucester had for some time been plotting to marry his royal nephew to one of the three daughters of the Count of Armagnac, and there are curious letters extant which show that a painter was employed by Henry to take portraits of the young ladies who were to be "painted in their kirtles simple, and their visages like as you see; and their stature and their beauty, the colour of their skin and their countenances."

But the artist appears to have proceeded in a leisurely way, and meantime Suffolk obtained a portrait of Marguerite, which gave such a fair image of her charms that the young King was delighted with it. But the strongest motive which decided him in favour of René's daughter was the same as that which induced him to set free the Duke of Orleans. She was a favourite niece of the wife of Charles VII, Marie of Anjou, and in those days, when alliances were looked upon as all-powerful, Henry believed that this would be the surest road to a permanent peace with France. The Earl of Suffolk was sent as ambassador to France that he might enter into negotiations, and he first met Charles Duke of Orleans at Tours, with whom he arranged a truce of two years to begin with. Suffolk had a difficult task, as the first condition of René, titular King of Naples and Jerusalem, was that the provinces of Anjou and Maine, "his hereditary dominions," which were partly in possession of the English, should be at once given up to him. This demand was supported by the King of France, and after some demur yielded by Henry and his council, while, in consideration of King René's poverty, neither money nor lands were to be demanded as dowry for his daughter. As might be expected, this marriage treaty was most unpopular in England, and there was strong opposition from the Duke of Gloucester and his party, but the young King had his way, and appointed Suffolk to act as proxy for him, writing thus—:

"As you have lately, by the Divine favour and grace, in our name and for us, engaged verbally the excellent, magnificent, and very bright Margaretta, the serene daughter of the King of Sicily, and sworn that

we shall contract matrimony with her, we consent and will that she be conducted to us over seas, from her country and friends, at our expense."

The marriage by proxy was a splendid ceremonial and was solemnized at Nancy in the church of St. Martin early in the year 1445, before a most distinguished company. King René, his wife, Isabelle of Lorraine, the King and Queen of France, and the Dauphiness Margaret, the Dukes of Bretagne, Alençon, and other great nobles, were amongst the wedding party. The bridal festivities lasted eight days. It is pleasant to know that Margaret of Scotland shone amidst the other fair ladies, and that she took her part in the entertainments. We are especially told that she distinguished herself in a certain stately "basse danse de Bourgogne, à figures variées, avec des pas simples, doubles, réculés, etc.," of which the curious notation has been recently found. It was rather like the more recent "contredanse." There were stately tournaments in which the knights wore garlands of daisies in honour of Marguerite, the fair young bride of fifteen. When the time came for her sad parting with her family, Charles VII himself conducted her on her way for two leagues out of Nancy, and took leave of his niece with great affection. Her eldest brother, John Duke of Calabria, and the Duke of Alençon accompanied her to England, a long and tedious journey of which there is a quaint record in the "*Breknote Computus*." The young Queen reached Pontoise on March 18, on the next day she went to sup with the Duke of York at Mantes, then to Vernon, where she slept, reaching Rouen on the 23rd, then to various other places till she reached the port of "Kiddecaws," whence she and her suite crossed to Porchester, arriv-

ing in a terrible storm. She slept in a convent at Portsmouth, and the next day, April 10th, was rowed to Southampton in great state. Here the poor girl fell ill, but had sufficiently recovered to be married to King Henry VI in person before the end of April, when amongst other wedding presents she received a young lion, a very expensive and awkward pet.

Marguerite had a splendid reception on her progress through London, the people wearing her emblem as they crowded to welcome her on her road to Westminster, where she was crowned with great magnificence.

> Of either sex, who doth not now delight
> To wear the daisy for Queen Marguerite?

says the poet Drayton. We shall meet the hapless Queen of Henry VI again in very different circumstances.

For a while no one ventured to speak openly against the King's marriage, but the terms on which it had been completed caused deep and growing discontent, and a day of reckoning was not far off. Although England had given up two rich and important provinces, the keys of Normandy, to a kinsman of the King of France, only truces were made from time to time, and difficulties always arose about a final peace, for which Charles VII was by no means anxious while the English retained any possessions on French soil.

At the time when the city of London rang with festive rejoicing for the wedding of Marguerite of Anjou, there were great entertainments at the French Court, which had moved to Châlons-sur-Marne. "L'an mil IIII^{c}XLV la sepmaine devant l'Ascension la royne de France, seur du roy de Cecile (René of Anjou) . . .

mons^{r} le dalphin, son filz, et madame la dalphine, sa femme, fille du roy d'Escosse, et mons^{r} le duc de Calabre" arrived in the town of Châlons, and the first day of June, the King our Lord, the King of Sicily above-mentioned, "messire Charles of Anjou," and a long list of noblemen, bishops, great statesmen, and ambassadors from many lands, all arrived in great state at Châlons. There also came Isabelle of Portugal, Duchess of Burgundy, wife of Philip the Good, accompanied by several noble lords of her country. "Et là furent faictes grandes, honorables et sumptueuses joustes ou marchié, à lices, et après à grant peine fut faicte pais et accort entre le roy et mondict sieur de Bourgoingne et aussy entre ledict roy de Cecile et l'edict de Bourgoigne."

"Et demoura le roy tant audict Chaalons comme à Sarrey jusques au mardi XVIIe jour d'aoust ensuivant, et se party soudainement comme dolant, couroucé et troublé pour le trespassement de madicte dame la dalfine, qui avoit esté trespassée audict Chaalons le lundi precédent environ XI heures devant minuit, et fut enterrée à Saint Estene et fait son service et donnée à chascun povre de X deniers tournois. . . .

"Durant la maladis de madicte dame la dalphine on fit cesser le sonner à toutes les eglises de Chaalons par l'espace devant huit jours."

(And there were made great, honourable, and sumptuous jousts and tournaments in the lists, and afterwards with much trouble there was peace and accord made between the King and my said Lord of Burgundy, and also between the said King of Sicily and the said Duke of Burgundy. And the King remained as much at the said Châlons as at Sarrey

until Tuesday the 17th day of August following, when he left suddenly, sorrowing, distressed, and troubled by the death of my said lady the Dauphiness, who had died at the said Châlons on the preceding Monday at about eleven o'clock, before midnight, and was buried at Saint Estene, and the service performed, and there was given to each poor person ten "deniers" [farthings] tournois. . . . During the illness of my said Lady the Dauphiness they ceased ringing the bells of the churches in Châlons for the space of eight days.)

We see that this courtly gathering at Châlons was for the purpose of making peace between Charles VII and Philip Duke of Burgundy, and also between the Duke and his old enemy and former prisoner, René of Anjou. That explains the presence of the Duchess of Burgundy and the tournaments and feasting. It was indeed a sad end of all this merry-making when the gentle Margaret of Scotland was taken ill and passed away after a very short illness, as the church bells were only silent for a week. We are told that she went for a pilgrimage on the 7th of August with the King to Nôtre Dame de l'Epine, and being overheated she caught a chill, which on her return to Sarrey brought on inflammation of the lungs. She had always been physically delicate and frail, and had been sorely troubled of late by the perfectly unfounded calumny of a certain Jamet du Tillay. From her last words she would seem to have been weary of life. "Fi de la vie de ce monde; ne m'en parlez plus!" Scarcely nine years had passed since she came as a bride from her pleasant home in Scotland, to pine away unloved and desolate in the cold uncongenial atmosphere of the

MARGARET OF SCOTLAND, WIFE OF LOUIS XI

From an old engraving by PICART

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French Court. History gives us many glimpses of her short married life. We know that Louis never cared for her, that she sought the pastime of other imprisoned souls, and devoted her time to the writing of poetry, sometimes composing as many as eight or ten rondels in a day.

Every one knows the romantic tradition that Margaret of Scotland, passing through the great hall of the palace, saw the aged poet Alain Chartier asleep and bent to kiss him. "Je n'ai pas baisé l'homme, mais la précieuse bouche de laquelle sont issus et sortis tant de bons mots et vertueuses sentences." So she expressed her hero worship to her wondering ladies.

The Princess Margaret cannot have had long warning of her fatal illness, as there is a letter from her written on the 2nd July, only six weeks before her death, in which she acknowledges the receipt from the King, through his banker (argentier) Jacques Cœur, of 2000 livres tournois, to buy cloth of silk and marten skins "pour faire robes pour notre personne." Charles VII appears to have always treated her with kindness and generosity. In the household accounts of "feue la Dauphine," there is a pathetic touch in the item that on the 19th of August, three days after her death, twenty-four members of her household travelled to Tournay to meet her two sisters, "mesdames Jeanne et Helienor d'Ecosse," who had in their escort "le sire de Gray, maistre Thomas Spens, archidiacre de Saint-Johnston audit pays d'Ecosse."

On landing in France these poor girls learnt at the same time the death of their sister, the Dauphine,

and of their mother. Charles VII received them with much kindness and subsequently found husbands for them. The eldest, Eleanor, was married in 1448 to Sigismund of Austria, previously betrothed to Madame Radégonde of France, who died. Jane had a Scotch lord for her husband. Another sister, Isabel, married François de Montfort, afterwards Duke of Brittany.

On the 20th of October the same year, Jean Marjoris, confessor of the Dauphin, receives from him the sum of 400 gold crowns to distribute to the Abbays of St. Antoine de Viennois, St. Eutrope de Saintes, and St. Fiacre, doubtless for Masses for the repose of the soul of the Princess Margaret. So she passes out of his life, but it was an evil day for Louis, as there is no doubt that her gentle influence did much to smooth over the constant differences between him and his father. Only the next year we find the Dauphin's restless spirit engaging in all kinds of independent action. He corresponds with the Venetians, to whom he proudly announces that he has been appointed *gonfalonier* of the Church by Pope Eugenius IV, he helps to start a new convent for Sister Colette at the request of the Duchess of Burgundy, and he carries on negotiations for the exchange and sale of territory with the Duke of Savoy. At length matters become so strained between himself and the King that, in a mood of discontent and rebellion, Louis retires into his own domain of Dauphiné, there to play the part of an independent monarch.

Some historians say that the final breach was caused by his behaving with scant courtesy to Agnes Sorel, who was at this time—the year 1446—in high favour with Charles VII and held a far more magnificent

Court than the Queen, Marie of Anjou, the Dauphin's neglected mother. The poor lady had never been of much account; indeed, Commines, who always speaks well of the Queen, remarks in his memoirs that "although an excellent princess in other respects, she was not a person in whom a man could take any great delight."

Marie was a gentle, affectionate creature, devoted from childhood to her husband, ready to submit to him in everything with the patience of a Griselda. She had thirteen children, who must have taken up much of her time and interest, although only six of them lived to grow up.

These were Louis the Dauphin, Catherine, the young bride of Charles of Burgundy, who died at Brussels in July of this year (1446) at the age of seventeen, Jeanne, who married later Jean Duke of Bourbon, Yolande, who became the wife of Amédée IX, Duke of Savoy, Madeleine, born in 1443, who was destined to marry Gaston de Foix, and Charles, the youngest son, who was not born till 1449.

During the lifetime of her mother, Yolande of Aragon, the Queen Marie was treated with certain outward respect, and Charles did not ostentatiously parade his infidelity to her. Yolande always had great influence over him, and when on November 14, 1442, she died in poverty, having spent all her estates and treasure for the kings of France and Sicily, Charles VII thus expressed his gratitude to her: "Feue de bonne mémoire Yolande, en son vivant reine de Jerusalem et de Sicile, mère de nostre très chère et tres amée compagne la Roine . . . nous ait en nostre jeune aage faict plusieurs grands plaisirs et services en maintes

manières, que nous avons et devons avoir en perpetuelle memoire . . . laquelle nostredicte bonne mère, après que fusmes deboutez de nostre ville de Paris, nous reçut liberalement en ses pais d'Anjou et du Maine et nous donna plusieurs avis, aydes, secours et services, tant de ses biens, gens et forteresses, pour resister aux entreprises de noz ennemis et adversaires les Anglois, que autres. . . ."

(The late Yolande of good memory, in her lifetime Queen of Jerusalem and of Sicily, mother of our very dear and much beloved companion the Queen . . . who in our youth rendered to us great pleasures and services in many ways, whom we have and should have in perpetual memory . . . the aforesaid our good mother, after we were turned out of Paris, received us liberally in her lands of Anjou and Maine, and gave us much advice, help, succour, and service, alike of her goods, her people, and her fortresses, to resist the enterprises of our enemies and adversaries the English, and others. . . .)

After the death of this noble, generous, and high-spirited woman, poor Marie was indeed of little account, although her fickle husband appears to have treated her with a sort of easy kindness. He gave her the Château of Mélun as a place of retreat when "la belle Agnès" was in the height of her short-lived magnificence and prosperity. But the gentle Queen appears to have preferred the Manoir of Corbeil, where she spent most of her time after the departure of the Dauphin, to whom she always gave the greatest share of her *tendresse de mère.*

Agnes Sorel has been such a favourite subject of romantic interest—the Nell Gwynne of France she has

been called—that we cannot pass on without a brief allusion to the story of her life. She was born at Fromenteau, in Touraine, and we first hear of her as one of the ladies of Yolande of Aragon, from whom she passed to the Court of Isabelle of Lorraine, wife of King René. In the year 1444 she still figures in the household accounts of Isabelle as receiving a salary of ten livres, although before that time she was in attendance upon the French Queen Marie. The *Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris* thus mentions her: "Item. The last week of April there came to Paris a damoiselle of whom it is said that she is publicly loved by the King of France, 'sans foy et sans loy et sans verité' to the good Queen whom he had married, and it is quite apparent that she holds as great state as a countess or a duchess . . . and the King has given her the most beautiful castle, that of Beauté, the finest and best situated in all the Isle de France; and she calls herself and is named 'la belle Agnès. . . .'" Beauté sur Marne, near the Bois de Vincennes, had been a royal residence. It was an excellent centre for hunting, the fashionable amusement of the period, and we find allusions to it in the letters of Agnes, who writes that "her *lévrier* Carpet is not to hunt with her, as he will obey neither whistle nor call."

In after years her memory was very popular in France, as her influence was believed to have made a victorious hero of Charles VII. Francis I wrote the following quatrain on her:—

> Gentille Agnèz, plus de los tu mérite
> La cause étant de France recouvrer,
> Que tout ce que en cloître peut ouvrer
> Close nonain ni en désert hermite.

We have no space to enter into the details of her life or the story of her four daughters. She died in piety and penitence at Mesnil in 1450, and we will take leave of her with the touching epitaph on her tomb at Jumièges: "Ci-gîst Agnès Surelle, noble damoiselle, en son vivant dame de Roque-ferriere, de Beauté, d'Issoudun et de Vernon-sur-Seine; piteuse entres toutes gens; qui de ses biens donnoit largement aux églises et aux pauvres; qui trépassa le 9 Fevrier l'an 1450. Priez pour elle."

It is worthy of remark that as soon as Louis XI came to the throne, the canons of Loches, in order to pay court to the King, prayed him to remove the monument of their benefactress, Agnès Sorel. "J'y consens, mais vous rendrez ce que vous tenez d'elle," was the calm reply. They insisted no more.

At the time of the breach between the father and son, which led to the Dauphin's departure for Dauphiné, Dammartin and Pierre de Brèzé were the trusted counsellors of Charles VII. They assured him that Louis had formed a plot against him, and a chronicle of the time relates that when his son had indignantly denied the accusation, the King exclaimed: "Loys, Saint Jehan! je ne vous crois pas! Loys, je vous bannis pour quatre mois de mon royaulme et vous en allez en Dauphiné!" In any case, the Dauphin retired to his appanage, and they parted never to meet again. Neither the threats nor the entreaties of his father in after years could persuade Louis again to appear at Court, for the King refused to banish the ministers who were looked upon by the heir to the throne as his malignant and dangerous foes.

This alone would tend to make him a centre of dis-

affection, and amongst other somewhat unwise friendships of the Dauphin, he was much devoted to his uncle, Charles Duke of Orleans, to whose ransom he had so largely contributed, and who was always disposed to take part in a mild way with any one who was in opposition to the Government. This is a letter Louis wrote to him, probably about this time :—

"Beaux oncles,—jé entendu que vous avés envye d'avoyr ung mulet, mès qu'yl allast byen ayze, et à ceste cauze, je vous envoye le myen; mès c'est en esperance que vous me donerés ung levryer; car on n'en peut pas byen fynés de bons de par de sa, et sy vous le faytes, et vous prenés playsir en autre chouze, soyt ne mulle, mullet ou troton, je vous en recompanseré byen. Et adyeu, beaux oncles. Escryt de ma main.

"A beaux oncles d'Orlyens. LOYS."

(Fair uncle,—I have heard that you would like to have a mule, but he must be a very free-goer, and for this reason I send you mine; but it is in the hope that you will give me a harrier; for it is not easy to find a good one here, and if you do so, and you take pleasure in anything else, be it mule, little mule, or "trotter," I will reward you well.

And adieu, fair uncle. Written by my hand.—LOYS.)

We have a very full and most interesting account in his letters of the young Dauphin's life in his own domain, where his active and governing spirit develops, and he acts like an independent sovereign. We find him coining money, raising taxes, and giving most special directions as to who shall be exempt from them. He obtains clerical preferment for various ecclesiastics in

whom he is interested, bends to his will both the nobles and the clergy, contracts alliances, and declares war on neighbouring states, receives ambassadors from most of the kingdoms of Europe, takes part in the affairs and quarrels of Italian Republics; in short, he acts as if Dauphiné were entirely independent of France. Louis founded a university at Valence, a parliament at Grenoble; he took an intelligent interest in the trade and agriculture of his province, and showed much ability in its administration.

Having been married once to please his father, he chose a wife for himself in 1451, Charlotte, the daughter of Louis I, Duke of Savoy, and Anne de Lusignan, Queen of Cyprus, and received with her the enormous dowry of 200,000 écus d'or. The consent of the King of France was not asked, the contract was secretly signed, and the Dauphin went to Chambéry and was married in the chapel of the château to the young princess, who was scarcely seven years old. When news reached Charles VII of the projected marriage, he was very angry and sent the herald of Normandy in all haste to forbid it, but the story goes that "on fit la célébration avant d'ouvrir les lettres."

In the archives of Turin there is a very curious declaration, dated March 13, 1451, of Amedée, the eldest son of the Duke of Savoy, who promises to remain in love and alliance with the Dauphin, and to uphold him with his body, his goods, and his might, against any who may oppose him. He also mentions having made espousals in the presence of Louis with "ma très chière et tres amée compagne dame Yolant de France sa seur"; and as this marriage actually took place the next year, we can only suppose that

Charles VII was pacified by that time. This Prince was called "le bienheureux Amédée"; his pious soul was drawn towards the contemplative life and he only married to please his father and help his country. Of the brave and spirited Yolande we shall hear more hereafter.

In the careful and minute accounts kept of all the Dauphin's expenditure, we have full particulars of the gifts he bestowed upon the princely household which accompanied little Charlotte of Savoy to Dauphiné. An archbishop, her mother's confessor, received eighteen marcs d'argent, her governess, the Countess de Gruyères, the same amount, a number of great ladies and officers of the establishment received money or jewels, and even the child's nurse was not forgotten. "A dame Loyse de Bethléem qui a nourry et alaicté madicte dame la daulphine. . . . Mille florins."

After this time we have several very interesting letters written by the Dauphin to his father, offering his services and his fortune to help drive out the English from Normandy and Guienne, but no notice was taken of them until, in October, 1452, he repeated his offer in the most urgent manner when Talbot landed at Bordeaux with a large army. ". . . vous offrir mon service et y mectre corps et biens, se vostre plaisir l'est me fayre ceste grace de m'en donner la charge et m'y employer, comme plus à plain le vous pourra dire ledit sieur de Barry, lequel vous plaise croyre. En priant le benoist filz de Dieu, mon très redoubté seigneur, qu'il vous doint très bonne vie et longue. . . . Vostre très humble et très obbeissant filz. LOYS."

This filial letter met with a curt refusal. For some years the King had been entirely under the influence of Brézé and Dammartin, both virulent enemies of the Dauphin, and who had recently pursued to his destruction the former favourite, Jacques Cœur, the great banker (argentier) of France ever since the year 1440. His public spirit and genius for finance saved the country at a most critical period, whose history would be incomplete without a brief account of Jacques Cœur.

He was a merchant at Bourges where his picturesque house still remains with its motto, "A vaillant coeur rien d'impossible." Michelet describes it: "Avancé un peu dans la rue, comme pour regarder et voir venir . . . se tient quasi close . . . à ces fausses fenêtres, deux valets en pierre ont l'air d'épier les gens." Early travels had revealed to his clear mind the secret of the commercial success of Italy, and he too went to Syria and Egypt, bringing from thence the treasures of the East until he flourished exceedingly and had a fleet of his own, whose coming and going he could watch from a princely mansion at Montpellier. Jacques Cœur rose to the highest favour, had a monopoly of the commerce of France, exploited mines, managed the coinage and finances, was the King's right hand, and lent him, in an evil hour, 200,000 crowns (24,000,000 francs of to-day) with which to conquer Normandy.

So splendid a position courted disaster. His watchful enemies took advantage of the King's grief on the sudden death of Agnès Sorel in 1450 to bring a false accusation against the great *argentier* of having poisoned her. Jacques Cœur was cast into prison, and once there it was easy to bring various calumnious or

trivial charges against him, such as having sold arms to the infidels, of having forced men to embark on his ships, of various exactions, etc. etc. We have a very long and full account of his trial, when he submitted to the good grace of the King, and placed all he had at His Majesty's disposal, but after cruel torture he was condemned, robbed of his immense fortune, and imprisoned at Beaucaire. Charles VII had not the courage to save his generous friend, whose real fault was "that he had too powerful a debtor." After several years of imprisonment he was rescued by some former clerks of his, and succeeded in reaching Rome, where he was received with great honour by the Pope. Full of adventurous spirit to the end, Jacques Cœur lost his life in a sea-fight at Chios, having taken command of some galleys sent against the Turks.

The disgrace of Jacques Cœur deprived Louis the Dauphin of a good friend at his father's Court, and from that time we find constant accusations brought against him which he had great difficulty in proving to be false, as we see from his letters. We cannot wonder that he refused to obey the King's summons to Paris, with the fate of the great *argentier* as a warning. At length, in the summer of 1456, Charles VII lost patience and approached the frontiers of Dauphiné with a large army under the command of Dammartin, his son's unscrupulous enemy. On hearing this the Dauphin felt there was no time to lose. On Monday, August 30, 1456, he set off with a hunting party, crossed the mountains to St. Claude in Savoy where he heard three Masses, and then wrote the following letter to his father :—

"*Au Roi de France.*

"SAINT-CLAUDE,
"31 *Aout*, 1456.

"Mon très redoubté seigneur,

"I recommend myself to your good favour as much and as humbly as I can. And may it please you to know, 'mon très redoubté seigneur,' that as you are aware, my fair uncle of Burgundy has the intention of shortly going against the Turk for the defence of the Catholic Faith, and that my wish would be to go also, with your good pleasure, seeing that our Holy Father has summoned me and that I am Gonfalonier of the Church, and took the oath at your command (in 1444); I am going towards my aforesaid fair uncle to know his intention with respect to his going, in order that I may employ myself in defence of the Catholic Faith, 'se mestier fait,' and also to implore him that he find means for me to remain in your good favour, which is the thing I desire most in this world. 'Mon très redoubté seigneur,' I pray God that he may give you a very good and long life. Written at Saint Claude, the last day of August.

"Your very humble and very obedient son,
"LOYS."

The Dauphin had previously shown his intention of joining a crusade against the Turks. In the Milan register of letters of Dukes of Milan, we read on the date of December, 1455, under a rubric concerning preparations for a crusade, the following passage about the Dauphin: "Lo illustrissimo signore delphyno de Franza" has the intention of going in person against the Turk . . . as we learn from his letters."

After leaving Saint-Claude Louis paid a brief visit to the Prince of Orange at Noseroy, crossed Lorraine and Luxembourg, found a refuge at Louvain, and at length reached Brussels. Duke Philip was absent, but the Duchess Isabelle gave the fugitive a warm welcome, and the Duke hastened back and showed the greatest kindness and cordiality. He offered to write to the King on his behalf, and Louis himself lost no time before sending many letters and ambassadors to his father, but he could obtain no favourable reply, although all the letters were carefully docketed, with the date of their reception. Charles VII at once proceeded to take possession of Dauphiné as a conquered possession, and gave the administration of the province into the hands of the Maréchal de Loheac and the Admiral Jean de Bueil. He then wrote a circular letter to all the towns of France announcing the flight of the Dauphin, and enjoining them not to favour his rebellion.

The little Dauphine Charlotte of Savoy was left behind with her household at Grenoble, where she had been established since the state marriage; but a few years later she was able to join her husband, the Duke of Burgundy having given them as a home the château of Genappe, near Brussels, "sur les marches de Haynault, qui est place plaisante à déduit des chiens et des oyseaults," says Mathieu d'Escouchy. There were great forests near in those days—a splendid hunting ground. Philip also generously allowed him a monthly pension of 2000 francs and later, 1000 gold crowns per month to the Dauphine besides allowances to his chief attendants; most timely help, as the Dauphin was in absolute poverty. There is an interest-

ing letter from Charlotte to her mother the Duchess of Savoy, written the following August, 1457, in which she begs that the arrears due from the income of her dowry may be paid at once, and she prettily adds: "car il me semble que ne lui devez pour quelconque chose faillir, veu les bons termes qu'il a tenuz et tient chaque jour que je vouldroye bien que sceussez, dont je me tiens la plus eureuse femme que oncques fust, ainsi que plus à plain j'ay chargé audit maistre d'ostel vous dire . . ." (for it seems to me that you should not fail him on any account, seeing the good terms on which he is towards me and continues every day, as I wish indeed that you knew, whereby I consider myself the happiest wife that ever was, which I have charged the aforesaid *maître d'hôtel* to tell you more fully . . . .)

Frequent embassies were sent by Philip of Burgundy and by Louis himself pleading for pardon, while the kings of Scotland, Castile, and others also tried to make peace between the father and son, but as Charles VII demanded the unconditional surrender and return to Paris of the Dauphin, who required that his chief enemies should first be dismissed from their posts, there was a deadlock, and all efforts at reconciliation were in vain. Meantime, Louis and his young wife appear to have found many alleviations in their exile. He was passionately fond of the chase, and there was good hunting and hawking in Brabant. As Michelet expresses it: "Toute la joie du manoir, tout le sel de la vie, c'était la chasse; au matin le reveil du cor, le jour la course au bois et la fatigue; au soir, le retour, le triomphe quand le vainqueur siégeait à la longue table avec sa bande joyeuse." Or, as the popu-

lar handbook of that period on the chase, that of Phœbus (Gaston de Foix), declares:—

"There is no man's life . . . less displeasable unto God than the life of a perfect and skilful hunter, or from which more good cometh. The first reason is that hunting causeth a man to eschew the seven deadly sins. Secondly, men are better when riding, more just and understanding . . . for the health of man and his soul. For whoso fleeth the seven deadly sins as we believe, . . . he shall be saved, therefore a good hunter shall be saved."

In the Dauphin's *Hunting Book* are still to be found all the names of his dogs. No doubt *Phœbus on Hunting* was one of the books in the library which the Dauphin, always a great reader, caused to be sent for from Dauphiné, and which contained many of the earliest printed books. He sent all over Europe for dogs and hawks; thus in a letter to the King of Aragon, written in the winter of 1457, he announces that he is sending his groom, Woustre, with a number of birds, but as there are no *sacres* (kind of falcon) in Brabant, and those are the birds in which he takes the greatest delight, he begs that two may be sent him in return. Later, he writes from Genappe to the Duke of Milan to thank him for a ger-falcon he has sent, and to present Francesco Sforza with three falcons in exchange.

It was possibly the accurate, mathematical mind of Louis which made him so scrupulous about paying his debts of every kind, for during his whole life it is worthy of remark that, often as he had need to borrow money, he invariably paid it back in full, both principal and interest.

Michelet's account of the exiled prince at the Court of

the Duke of Burgundy—"cet humble et doux dauphin, nourri chez Philippe le Bon des miettes de sa table . . . il lui fallait rire et faire rire, être bon compagnon, jouer aux petits contes, en faire lui-meme . . . ."—may be correct, but there is no doubt that he was treated with great honour and respect. When a daughter was born to the heir of Burgundy, Charles Comte of Charolois, and his second wife, Isabelle de Bourbon, it was the Dauphin of France who supported the head of the infant princess at the font, as her godfather, when she was held in the arms of her grandmother, and he gave her the name of Marie, for the sake of his mother, Marie of Anjou.

This was in February, 1457, and began his earliest connection with Marie of Burgundy, who was destined to be sole heir of her father's vast domains, and to meet her gentle *compère* on far other terms.

More than two years later we have a most interesting letter in which Louis announces to his father the birth of his first child. It is dated July 27, 1459, and is written from Nôtre-Dame de Hal. "'Mon très redoubté seigneur. . . . ' it has pleased our blessed Creator and the glorious Virgin His mother to deliver on the morning of this day my wife of a fine son, for which I praise my Creator, and thank Him most humbly for that in His clemency it has pleased Him to visit me so benignly and to give me true knowledge of His infinite grace and goodness, which things, 'mon très redoubté seigneur,' I signify to you in all humility, in order that I may always give you my news, and likewise when they are good and joyful, as there is reason and I am bound to do. . . ."

Charles VII received this letter on August 5, and two

Photo by Hanfstaengl

JOHANN ARNOLFINI

After the portrait by J. Van Eyck

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days afterwards wrote his congratulations. The Dauphin also sent letters to announce the birth of his heir to his brother, Prince Charles, then a boy of thirteen, and also to the city of Paris, of Lyons, and other places, to request that the usual rejoicings should take place, and that there should be public thanksgiving in the churches. The authorities applied to the King, who appears to have permitted the festivities. Several friendly letters are preserved which passed between Charles VII and the gentle Charlotte, the daughter-in-law whom he never saw.

As for the infant son, he received the name of Joachim at the stately christening when Philip Duke of Burgundy was his godfather, but he died the following November, to the great disappointment and grief of his parents. Early in the year 1461 a daughter was born to them, the great Anne of France, afterwards Regent of the kingdom.

We do not dwell upon the troubled and complicated politics of the Court of Burgundy, where father and son were almost as much opposed to each other as the King of France and his heir, because in this struggle for supremacy Louis the Dauphin took no part, and kept on good terms with every one. Charles VII's remark on this diplomatic conduct is well known: "Our brother Philip has taken home a fox who will eat his chickens."

The letters of the exiled prince during this period show the interest which he took in foreign affairs. He writes often to the Duke of Milan, also to Pope Pius II, to the King of Navarre, and "in most friendly" style to Don Carlos, Prince of Navarre, to his sister the Duchess Yolande of Savoy, and to various ecclesi-

astical bodies with regard to appointments, one of the latest being to the Chapter of Saint Martin de Tours, asking them to give the first canonry vacant to Henri Cœur, the son of the famous Jacques Cœur, the disgraced *argentier*. As Michelet describes the Dauphin Louis: "Né dans les affaires mêmes, très spirituel et très instruit, à quatorze ans il faisait deja la guerre, menait les armées; c'etait un roi tout prêt. . . ."

As an illustration of this lively intelligence we find Louis the centre of a kind of literary society, where the men of letters and other members of his small Court met together, either to read or invent short amusing *contes* in imitation of the popular *Decameron* of Boccaccio, and much in the same style as the later *Heptameron* of Marguerite of Navarre. They were witty, satirical, even burlesque, and by no means refined, but according to the taste of the period. At least seven are attributed to the Dauphin himself, and Duke Philip is supposed to have contributed three of the "Cent nouvelles nouvelles" as they were called. They were collected and published for the first time in 1486, after the death of Louis XI.

Amongst other very interesting letters written by the Dauphin during his abode at Genappe, we have several addressed to John Arnolfini, the merchant of Lucca, probably the same who was painted at Bruges as a young man by John Van Eyck. Louis calls him "Jehan mon amy," and asks him to send forty-three yards of a very special crimson velvet, promising to pay him well for it in the future (as he did, with interest). Arnolfini appears to have been a banker also, as he pays over a large sum of money for him later.

The whole story of the Dauphin's life has been fully

welt upon here, as it has received but little attention om historians generally, although during these thirty-ght years of action and endurance, the character f the future king was gradually built up, and "il se repara à fonder l'unité françoise."

CHAPTER IV

1461-2

DEATH OF CHARLES VII—ACCESSION OF LOUIS XI—HE TRAVELS TO PARIS WITH THE DUKE OF BURGUNDY—STATE OF FRANCE—THE GREAT NOBLES—CONCERNING THE PRAGMATIC SANCTION—LOUIS XI SUPPORTS THE HOUSE OF ANJOU AT NAPLES—DON CARLOS OF VIANA—MADELEINE OF FRANCE MARRIES GASTON DE FOIX.

ON Wednesday, July 22nd, 1461, the King of France, Charles VII the Victorious, came to a miserable end. For some time he had been in ill-health—the penalty of a life of dissipation, aggravated of late by constant anxiety and suspicion of all who surrounded him. His heir, the Dauphin Louis, was an honoured guest at the Court of Philip Duke of Burgundy, with whom the King had always cause for enmity, and father and son had not met for fifteen years since Louis retired to his appanage of Dauphiné. This was a constant source of annoyance to Charles, but as his favourite and trusted minister, Dammartin, was the open enemy of the Dauphin, the young Prince was probably wise in keeping out of his reach.

The *Chronique Martinienne* states that Louis wrote a letter addressed to Mademoiselle de Villequier, the King's mistress, in which he spoke of her and Dammartin as his secret allies, on purpose that it might be intercepted by the King. But the great archivist

M. Charavay, who devoted more than twenty years to collecting the correspondence of the Dauphin, points out that the date given—August 30th, 1461—must be wrong, as Louis was then King, also he has not seen the letter and cannot answer for the "veracity of this mysterious story." This has been often repeated as a proof of the Dauphin's treachery, and also to justify the unfortunate King's cruel suspicion that he was in danger of poison. So strong became this dread—probably a touch of his father's insanity—that Charles refused to touch any food at the last, and died of starvation in the castle of Méhun-sur-Yévre, about two miles from Bourges. Only a few faithful friends remained with him to the last, as most of the courtiers hastened to worship the rising sun.

The tidings soon reached the new King, Louis XI, and Chastellain thus expresses his feeling: "Hier encore me tenoys pour le plus povre filz de roy qui oncques fust . . . et maintenant, tout souldainement, comme se je partoye d'ung songe, Dieu m'a envoyé nouvel eur; et en lieu de ma povreté passée, m'a faict le plus riche et plus puissant roy des chrestierns."

Louis wrote at once to the Archbishop of Rheims to make preparation for his coronation, and also sent word to all the chief authorities in France, princes, governors, generals, clergy, and town dignitaries, announcing his succession and expressing his desire to work actively for the good of his country with the help of all his people. He at once prepared for his journey, in which the Duke of Burgundy offered to accompany him with all his great nobles and vassals. It was a splendid opportunity, and so numerous a

company assembled, that Louis had to damp the zeal of his friends by suggesting that the Lord of Burgundy should be content with an escort of three or four thousand followers. At Avesnes a solemn funeral service was held, and at the close of the ceremony Louis put on the royal purple, but his equipage was very modest compared with the gorgeous show of Duke Philip's triumphal procession. He and his son, Charles Count of Charolois, with the chief nobles of Burgundy, wore magnificent costumes blazing with jewels, and the knights, archers, men-at-arms, heralds, and pages proclaimed his wealth and power. Even the trappings of the horses were of velvet and silk embroidered in gold with the arms of Burgundy and fringed with silver bells. A multitude of wagons, covered with rich brocades and banners, carried the tents and furniture, and were followed by oxen and sheep and other provision for the way. Charlotte of Savoy, when she set forth to be Queen of France, was glad to borrow the horses and chariots of the Countess of Charolois.

If the new King had any doubts as to the reception he would receive, these were soon set at rest, for he was met by a constant stream of deputations from the chief cities, from the great lords and those who wished to be continued in their offices. At Château-Thierry, amongst others, Thomas Basin, Bishop of Lisieux, came to welcome and congratulate the new King, with whom in later days he was to have so deadly a feud and was to paint in the blackest hues.

The coronation took place at Rheims, and was a most imposing ceremony, in which, after the anointing with holy oil, Philip of Burgundy played the most important part, that of placing the massive crown on the King's

head and proclaiming him with the battle cry of France, "Vive le Roy, Montjoye Saint Denis!" The people shouted in response amid the peal of trumpets and clarions. The Duke then humbled himself to do homage for the fiefs which he held from the Crown of France. The Duke of Bourbon followed, then the counts of Nevers, of Vendôme, and other peers knelt to vow fealty to their liege lord. From Rheims the King travelled onwards to Meaux and thence to Saint Denis, where a solemn service was celebrated at his father's tomb. On the 31st of August he entered Paris with a stately procession and was welcomed with magnificent festivities, in which the Duke of Burgundy was distinguished for his profusion and extravagance. He was very popular with the inhabitants, who exclaimed as they saw him parading the streets covered with his priceless jewels and sometimes with a fair lady at his saddle-bow: "Et velà ung humain princhè! velà ung seigneur dont ung monde seroit estoré de l'avoir tel!" (Here is a human prince! Here is a lord whom a world would rejoice to have thus!)

Louis, on the contrary, never appealed by outward magnificence to the popular taste. He was glad to put off his regal purpoint of crimson satin and long robe of white damask for a doublet and short mantle of grey fustian. The gorgeous brocades of Venice, the costly tapestries of Arras, only aroused in him a keen desire that his own country should produce them. He had already started looms at Lyons years before, and he now sought to encourage these splendid industries at Tours; he sent to the south of France, to Italy, and even to Greece for weavers and dyers with all their tools, and later he planted mulberry trees in his park at

Plessis and wherever he could persuade people to have them.

After an absence from Paris of fifteen years, during which he had been of no account, ever spoken of at Court with contempt, the new King found it necessary to dismiss all the chief ministers in order to assert his authority. Many of these he replaced later, but he also chose men for himself, such as the monk of Cluny, Pierre de Morvilliers, against whom a charge had been made, but when in the royal presence he was offered pardon, he boldly demanded justice only. "Je vous fait chancellier de France: soyez preud'homme," said the King. Another minister who had always been opposed to him, Pierre de Brézé, when informed that Louis XI had put a price on his head, "se décida à le porter lui-meme, et le roi, qui avait beaucoup d'esprit, le reçut à merveille," says Michelet.

Before he set forth on the 24th of September to visit his mother, Marie of Anjou, at Amboise, Louis took leave with great friendliness of the Duke of Burgundy, who behaved with ostentatious humility. We are told that Philip and his nobles were disappointed with the rewards which they had received from the King, as they had formed the wildest expectations. Yet Louis had refused the Duke nothing; he had made satisfactory arrangements about the payment of ancient debts and the free intercourse in trade between the two states, with very great privileges for subjects of the Duke, and many favours to his ministers. His son the Count of Charolois had received the appointment of Lieutenant-General of Normandy, or at least the salary of 36,000 livres attached to the post; the Seneschal of Burgundy had the countship of Charni, Antoine de

Croy received a valuable estate and a future claim to the Grand Mastership of France, while Jean de Croy was given the emoluments of Counsellor and Chamberlain. Charles of Burgundy was also invited to pay the King a visit at Tours, where he was most graciously received and spent a month, during which great entertainments and hunting parties were given in his honour. On one occasion the Count pursued "une bête rousse" so far that he lost his way, and there was the utmost alarm and dismay at the castle of Tours, the King making a vow that he would neither eat nor drink until his guest's return. However, Charles had only taken refuge in a village inn, as it was a dark night.

One of the first acts of Louis XI had been to set free Jean Duke of Alençon, his godfather, who was imprisoned for rebellion in the prison of Loches. All his "rights, honours, and estates" were restored to him, but the King reserved the privilege of arranging marriages for the Duke's sons and daughters; always a subject in which he showed the greatest interest. Louis considered that the dower of his mother was insufficient, and he bestowed upon her various lands and rights, of which the income amounted to 50,000 livres tournois. He did not forget his younger brother, Charles, who had no suitable appanage, and assigned to him the duchy of Berry, with all its cities, fortresses, patronage, etc., adding to it a yearly allowance of 12,000 livres. He also extended a pardon to the unworthy Jean of Armagnac, paid with interest all debts owing by the late King and incurred by himself in the days of his poverty, and he gave large gifts to various churches and abbeys.

It is very important to consider the position in which Louis XI found himself at his accession with regard to the great nobles of France, who almost resembled so many petty kings. The whole country was indeed like a fortress with all its outworks in the hands of independent rulers who were usually foes. A study of the map of France in the fifteenth century proves this very clearly. The great possessions of the Duke of Burgundy close in France to the east and the north ; the duchy of Burgundy (Yvonne, Côte d'Or, Nièvre, and Saône-et-Loire) having been originally given as an appanage to Philip, the youngest son of John the Good, who distinguished himself at the battle of Poictiers. To this had been added one province after another from beyond—Brabant, Luxembourg, Flanders, Hainault, Holland, Zeeland, Franche-Comté, Artois, and others—by conquest, alliance, or purchase, but the whole amazing record of successful ambition has been so fully told elsewhere[1] that it need not be repeated here. Enough that the Duke of Burgundy was ever a rival to the King of France, and the very existence of so powerful a vassal was a constant menace.

The next in importance was the duchy of Brittany, which, like Burgundy, was exempt from royal *taille* and *aide*, was not bound to support the King of France in his wars, and had its own laws and its own coinage of gold and silver. In his far-western sea-coast province, the Duke of Brittany, with his hardy, intractable Celtic people, refused to take the oath of allegiance in the usual form, and behaved like an independent sovereign, treating directly with the King of England

[1] *Marguerite of Austria*, Christopher Hare.

and the Court of Rome. South of Brittany was Guienne, which had but recently been recovered from the English, whose rule had been popular there; while to the north was Normandy, the heritage of the Plantagenets, still perhaps half English in feeling.

Close by were Maine and Anjou, which with the south-eastern dukedom of Provence, and Lorraine and Bar to the north, belonged to the House of Anjou. In the south-west, bordering on the Pyrenees and Spain, were the countships of Cominges, of Foix, the dominions of the House of Albret, of the Duke of Nemours, and of the Count of Armagnac. In the heart of his kingdom, Louis had other feudal vassals whose loyalty was at least doubtful—Charles of Orleans, and the lords of Bourbon, of Alençon, of Blois, and others.

Such was the position which Louis XI had to face, and his one steady aim was to bring all these conflicting interests together, and to found the unity of France upon the basis of an absolute monarchy, a citadel in which all the outposts should be held by loyal subjects. In order to accomplish this tremendous task it was necessary to subjugate the nobles, to win them to his cause by every means, but at the same time to punish any treachery on their part with unrelenting sternness. As we know, by so doing he won a bitter meed of obloquy, while the *bourgeoisie*, whose industry and fortune he encouraged, never forgave him for the heavy taxation which he was compelled to impose upon them. Money was an absolute necessity for King Louis XI, so ardent a lover of peace that he would always buy off an enemy rather than fight him, and thus let his subjects, whose land had long been made desolate by war, pay with their coins rather than their lives.

We have several very interesting letters written soon after the King's accession which show his accurate information and keen interest about foreign affairs. There are four letters written in Latin to Francesco Sforza, Duke of Milan, with whom he had been on such friendly terms when Dauphin. They are on the subject of various embassies which have been sent, and there is another letter in French telling all about the troubles caused in the House of Savoy by the compatriots of the Duchess, Anne of Cyprus. Louis also writes to Sigismondo Malatesta, Lord of Rimini, asking him to give his help and support to the cause of René, King of Sicily, and Jean, Duke of Calabria, his son, in their attempts to recover the kingdom of Naples. It is addressed thus: "Illustri ac potenti Sigismundo de Malatestis, Arimini domino, armorumque strenuo capitaneo, amico nostro carissimo."

In 1458, Pius II (Æneas Sylvius Piccolomini of Siena) had succeeded to the papal throne, and he at once turned his attention to the abolition of the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges, granted by Charles VII in 1438, and which the Pope considered incompatible with the rights of the papacy. This famous deed had secured the freedom of canonical elections, depriving the Pope of the right of nomination to bishoprics and benefices, and allowing each chapter to elect its own bishop, and each monastery its prior. In point of fact, the sovereign authority of the King was recognized, and freedom of election really meant little more than freedom to receive recommendations from the King or others. But there was certainly less drain of money from France to Rome.

Pius II seems to have felt so strongly on the subject that he is said to have made overtures by his Legate,

Jean Joffredi, to the Dauphin, when he was still at Genappe. On the accession of Louis, Joffredi was sent to him again, with the understanding that if he succeeded in his delicate mission, a cardinal's hat would be the reward. It was pointed out to the King that there was so much sympathy between the aristocracy and the clergy that the elections really gave the nobles a means of influence, and thus became a new peril to the throne. Louis was moreover given to understand that if he made this important concession, Pius II would always defer to his wishes about presentations, and would also forward the cause of the House of Anjou at Naples. By the end of 1461, the promise of Louis to abolish the Pragmatic Sanction had been unwillingly registered by the "Parlement" as a royal ordinance. Pope Pius wrote a wonderful letter of congratulation to the King, comparing him to Constantine and Charlemagne, sending him heartfelt love, calling him a great king, and promising that posterity will talk of him. A sword blessed by the Pope himself accompanied this letter. Yet in the end there was no great result, for Pius opposed René of Anjou, being pledged to help Ferrante at Naples; possibly the Legate may have gone beyond his instructions. Louis was bitterly disappointed, and although the Pragmatic Sanction was not formally restored, his policy henceforth was to keep the whole matter open, and to retain all important ecclesiastical patronage in his own hands.

Louis XI was at this time so closely identified with the interests of the House of Anjou that he formally betrothed his baby daughter, Anne of France, to the son of Jean of Calabria, Nicholas of Lorraine, aged thirteen. He even paid a portion of the promised

dowry, 100,000 écus, but the marriage never came to pass.

Neither René of Provence nor his son, Jean of Calabria, were present at the coronation of the King, but they sent the flower of their nobility, while they were engaged in fighting for the crown of Naples, which Alfonso of Aragon on his death had left to his illegitimate son Ferrante. The King of France would gladly have seen a French dynasty established on the throne of Naples; and he had already sent embassies requesting help for his kinsman which were well received, not only by his friend the Duke of Milan, but also by Sigismondo Malatesti of Rimini, and by Ferrara and Venice. Jean of Calabria had been successful at Sarno on July 7, and at San-Fabiano July 27, 1460, but he had not taken full advantage of his victories, and meantime his enemy Ferrante had time to recover his forces.

Louis writes to the states of Catalonia from Tours, on October 13, 1461, to express his deep sorrow on hearing of the death of Don Carlos, Prince of Viana, "duquel décès avons esté e sommes très correzés et desplasants . . . et por la bonne, grande e ferme amor qui estoit entre nous e luy. . . ." In another letter written a few days later, when he sends a promise of protection to the Catalans, he speaks again of "la singulière amour et dilection que nous avions . . . de nostre dit feu frère. . . ." Don Carlos, Prince of Viana, was the eldest son of Juan II, King of Aragon, and was rightful King of Navarre which he inherited from his mother. He was a most interesting personality, and was distinguished in music, painting, and poetry. He translated the Ethics of Aristotle and

wrote a Chronicle, to beguile the long hours of imprisonment to which his father had unjustly condemned him. He had just been welcomed with enthusiasm at Barcelona when he died suddenly, with suspicion of poison. His sister Blanche, divorced wife of Enrique IV of Castile, was the next heir of Navarre, and it is on her behalf that Louis XI writes again on November 9 to the states of Catalonia, urgently requesting that the Princess may be set at liberty. He is so much in earnest for the "délivrance de notre dite cosine, ensemble de sondit herétage," that he sends a special ambassador to the Court of Juan II of Aragon, to press the matter. This letter is important evidence on behalf of Louis XI, who has been accused of connivance at the sad fate which befell this unfortunate lady some years later.

In studying the letters of Louis XI, it is striking to find how vivid and minute an interest he takes in everything connected with his government; he desired to know everything and he forgot nothing. Soon after his accession he wrote to the Count de Foix commanding him to give up the little town of Mauléon-de-Soule which he had taken from the English twelve years before. This may have drawn his special attention to the Pyrenees, the great frontier barrier which protected France from Spain, for we find him soon after entering into intimate relations with the Count de Foix, and even offering his young sister, Madeleine of France, then ten years old, as a bride for the son of Gaston de Foix; his father giving him several townships, and the vacant title of Prince of Viana, with all his rights in the kingdom of Navarre if it should ever come to him. The contract was signed at Saint-Jean-d'Angely, on

the 11th of January, 1462, in the presence of the King of France, and the marriage was celebrated on March 7th at Bordeaux, the young prince of Viana remaining with Louis, who had become attached to him.

King Juan II of Aragon at once sought the alliance of France, and the two Kings met, and signed a treaty at Bayonne on May 9, by which Louis XI promised Juan of Aragon the support of seven hundred lances at once, and four hundred later if necessary, to subdue Catalonia. Each lance consisted of one man-at-arms, two archers, one swordsman, one valet, and one page. On his side, Juan engaged to pay 300,000 écus d'or, and for this payment he gave Louis in pledge the provinces of Cerdagne and Roussillon. He also promised to try and persuade his daughter Blanche to enter a convent and yield her claims to Navarre. The end of this sad story took place some years later, when the unhappy Princess, having refused, was given up to Gaston IV and her youngest sister, Leonore, who imprisoned her in the Château d'Orthez, where she died in 1465, and foul play has always been suspected.

Louis XI fully appreciated the advantage of having a strong hold upon Roussillon and Cerdagne, which were to him advanced outposts of empire, from whence he might observe all that happened in Spain. He could also form commercial relations with that country, and in case of trouble with his nobles in the south, he would have a base from which to attack them in the rear. We can find no evidence to justify the common suspicion that he was indifferent to the fate of Queen Blanche, whose kingdom of Navarre was ultimately to fall into the hands of her half-brother, Ferdinand of Aragon.

POPE PIUS II

From an old engraving

To face p. 80

CHAPTER V

1462, 1463

MARGUERITE OF ANJOU SEEKS THE HELP OF LOUIS—LOUIS XI TAKES POSSESSION OF ROUSSILLON—PHILIPPE DE COMMINES—LOUIS RECOVERS THE TOWNS ON THE SOMME—CONSPIRACY AGAINST THE KING—DEATH OF CHARLES OF ORLEANS.

ARDENTLY as he desired peace, which he looked upon as the sole salvation of his country, Louis XI found himself in the midst of strife on all sides. While doing his utmost by diplomacy to further the cause of the House of Anjou in Naples, another member of the same family, Marguerite, the daughter of René, and wife of Henry VI, was making a desperate appeal for more substantial help. The King was still at Bordeaux in May, 1462, when he wrote a letter to the Admiral of France, saying that the Queen of England had arrived at Angers, and that he wished to consult at once as to what he could do for her. "Toutesvoyes, il est force d'entendre à son fait et de la soustenir de tout nostre povoir, car c'est le boulvert contre le roi Edouart." (At all events it is necessary to attend to her case, and to maintain her with all our power, for it is the bulwark against King Edward.)

Louis XI was in a very difficult position, as the state of his kingdom made it most desirable for him to be at

peace with England, where the House of York was now victorious, Edward IV having been crowned king in the previous spring of 1461. After the fatal battle of Towton, fought on Palm Sunday, the hopes of the Lancastrians were almost destroyed, and the deposed king, Henry VI, fled with his wife to Scotland. But the indomitable spirit of Marguerite induced her to hope for success if she could obtain the help of France; and with this expectation, on April 3rd, 1462, she sailed from Kirkcudbright through the Irish Channel into Brittany.

Meantime we find a mysterious letter written by Louis to a devoted follower of his, Aymar de Poysieu, who always went by the name of Cadorat (*Tête dorée*), on account of his golden hair.

"*De par le roy.*

"Cadorat, nous avons sceu que la royne [Marguerite of Anjou] vient à Tours, et pour ce essayez par bons moyens, et sans faire semblant, qu'elle ne viengne point à Amboise; aussi que ma femme n'aille point devers elle à Tours, pour rien que soit. . . ." (Cadorat, we have heard that the Queen is coming to Tours, and I would have you try by good means, without appearing to do so, that she come no further, and that she does not go to Amboise; also that my wife should not go to meet her on any account whatever. . . .") Louis also writes a letter to his wife, Charlotte, inviting her to come and join him at Melun. We have no clue to the reason for his earnest desire that the two Queens should not meet. He concluded an agreement with Marguerite on June 23rd, by which she promised, for the sum of 20,000 livres, to appoint Jean de Foix Governor of Calais (if it came into her power again), and it

vould be placed in the hands of the King of France f the money were not repaid. Louis also helped her vith a small force of men, and wrote a letter to the Chapter of Rouen requesting that the Queen of England hould be welcomed and received with as much honour, everence, and "bonne chière" as if she were "our ery dear and well-beloved consort the Queen." In the rchives of Rouen we find a very full and picturesque ccount of the grand reception accorded and the procession of town councillors on horseback who accompanied the Queen to her abode, the "hostel du Lyon 'or, chez Regnaud de Villene, advocat à Rouen."

Marguerite returned to Scotland and made an attempt o invade England by sea, but a violent storm arose; ome of the ships were sunk, while others were driven n the shores of Holy Island, off the coast of Northumberland; and the Queen herself barely escaped with her fe in a small fishing-boat to Berwick. Still undaunted, he soon after made another attempt by land, and ntered Northumberland with the help of the border lans. At first she was so successful that the strong astles of Bamborough, Dunstanborough, and Alnwick ell into her hands, but they were retaken before the nd of the year, and she herself narrowly escaped alling into the hands of her enemies. We are all amiliar with the story of the friendly robber who elped her and her son to safety, and how they set sail rom Sluys and went to Bruges, where she sought the elp of the Duke of Burgundy. He received her indly, but would not take her part against his ally, dward IV; so the unfortunate lady was compelled to etire to a castle of her father's in the duchy of Bar, and atch from afar the course of events.

After the departure of Marguerite from France in July, 1462, Louis XI was actively engaged in preparation for the "campaign of Roussillon." But first it was needful to see to the defence of his chief towns, as it was expected that Edward IV would invade France in reprisal of the help given to Marguerite of Anjou. Thus the King writes giving the fullest instructions to the Bailli of Rouen, to Toulouse, to Bordeaux, to Bayonne, to Dax and Blaye, to the Sire de Beaujen, to the Seneschals of Limousin, of Lannes, and others, to spare no labour or expense in strengthening the fortresses and keeping good watch. In a letter to his uncle, the Count of Maine, in July, Louis mentions that an English fleet has left Sandwich, but whether it is bound for Ireland or for Bordeaux is uncertain. Meantime Roussillon and Cerdagne being in revolt, the Count de Foix reached Narbonne with an army of more than a thousand "lances," five or six thousand "francs-archers," and some good artillery. He advanced to meet the Catalonians, induced them to leave their retrenchments and defeated them, and took possession of several strong places in the Pyrenees. Urgent appeals reached him from Juana Queen of Aragon, who was besieged by the Count of Palhas in Gerona and reduced to the last extremities. The French Army succeeded in passing through the col de Perthus, where a hundred resolute men might have held the pass, and reached Gerona in time to save Queen Juana, while the besieging army escaped to Barcelona. After several other successes the Count de Foix met Juan II, King of Aragon, who congratulated him on his victories, and was amazed that so much heavy artillery could have been transported over the mountains.

In the hour of triumph Juan became foolhardy, and hought all things possible to him. Having cause to omplain of Barcelona, he decided to besiege that trong city so splendidly garrisoned, and protected by he sea. The army within the walls was four times the umber of the attacking force. After three weeks of nvestment no progress had been made, and a rumour pread that a Castilian army was approaching. The Count de Foix thought it prudent to retreat, and Tarrona was next besieged, but after many brave men ad lost their lives, the town was spared on making a ayment of 30,000 florins.

When the campaign in Catalonia was over, Juan II ried to persuade the French auxiliaries to join with im in fighting against Castile, but they refused, as here was an alliance between the King of France and Enrique IV of Castile. The King of Aragon in his isappointment, sought to make mischief between England and France, but his messenger was taken risoner and the plot was discovered. Then Juan tried o incite the city of Perpignan to rebellion, and the rench garrison was besieged in the citadel. In all mergencies of this kind, the commands of Louis XI ere always full of energy and precision. These were he instructions which he sent at once to one of his usted officers when a conspiracy was supposed to be n foot. "You are on the spot. Go there (to Perignan) if you have not already done so. Examine osely. If you find that it is so, let justice be done on l from the highest to the lowest. In any case you can ake sure of those you suspect, and if necessary send hem to me under pretext that they can make their xcuses. With regard to the viscounts who are men-

tioned, tell my fair cousin of Nemours to send them at once to me, and not to give them the places they demand. Place all the artillery in the castle of Narbonne, if it is not already there. I beg of you not to fail in this hour of need; but remain until the danger is over and you are completely satisfied."

Before Christmas, the King set forth from Touraine towards the south, that he might be nearer the seat of war. At La Rochelle he met his mother, Marie of Anjou, who was going on a pilgrimage to St. James of Compostella in Spain, to make sure that two lighted candles were always kept burning there before the altar, "as the Kings of France had vowed." It was the last time that Louis saw her, for the dowager Queen died at Poitiers on her return from the long rough journey.

On receiving news that Roussillon was again subdued, the King, as was his custom, gave large gifts to the church of St. Martin at Tours and the abbey of Nôtre-Dame de Selles in Poitou. He also, at the request of the States of Guienne, established a parliament there. While at Bordeaux he received an unexpected visit from Antoine de Chabannes, Count of Dammartin, and expressed his surprise that his enemy should have ventured into his presence. "Do you ask for justice or mercy?" added the King. "Sire, I prefer justice," was the reply. "Then I banish you for ever from my kingdom," was his sentence. Louis gave him money for his journey, as Dammartin pleaded poverty, but later, in the hope of saving his estates, he pleaded before the courts and was condemned to imprisonment in the Bastille.

At Easter the King went to Bayonne, where he met

the Count de Foix, with his wife Léonore and his daughter Marie, and had a splendid reception. A great conference was held here, to which Castile and Aragon sent ambassadors, and a treaty of peace was concluded, to be followed by a general amnesty. At the end of April, 1463, the kings of France and Castile had a stately interview on the banks of the Bidassoa, where Louis was accompanied by his brother, the Duke of Berry, the Count and Countess of Foix, and the Prince of Viana, the Duke of Bourbon, the counts of Dunois and Comminges, and others. Enrique IV came with a magnificent suite, all decked out with Oriental splendour, and glittering with gold and precious stones on their rich brocades—a striking contrast to the simplicity of the French King. The Treaty of Bayonne was signed and ratified by the two monarchs, who were so strong a contrast to each other in every way; and immediately afterwards we find Louis XI sending the Archbishop of Bordeaux to Barcelona, to persuade the people of Catalonia to submit loyally to the terms arranged. Louis also met the King of Aragon on May 3 at St. Jean-de-Luz, in order to make yet stronger assurance of peace.

Meantime, affairs in Italy had been most disastrous to the House of Anjou. Pope Pius II had exerted himself with the utmost vigour on behalf of Ferrante, and had obtained the services of the famous captain, George Castriot, the terror of the Turks, by whose help the battle of Troja was won on August 18, 1462. This defeat decided the question against Jean of Calabria, who, driven from one place to another, and seeing his partisans gradually fall away, was at length, in the next year, compelled to leave Italy and retire to his

father's estates in Provence. As late as May 30, 1463, Louis wrote a pressing letter from Toulouse to the Republic of Florence, praying that no support might be given to the enemies of the Prince of Calabria, but this was of no avail, for the cause was already lost. Louis always took the greatest interest in the affairs of Italy, but he was wise enough to see that it was against the interest of the French Crown to hold isolated possessions in that country, and before the end of 1463, he actually gave up to the Duke of Milan the city of Genoa (which had belonged to his predecessor) and a little later the town of Savona. In a long and interesting Italian letter written at Abbeville on October 24, Louis fully explains his reasons to Francesco Sforza, who is naturally extremely grateful. In writing to Fogliano, who was to take possession for him, he speaks of the King's greatness of soul, which makes all the glory and splendour of the "très-haute et très-puissante maison de France."

Louis XI in another letter explains to the Duke of Milan that he would gladly have given up the county of Asti also, but that belongs to the Duke of Orleans (inherited from Valentine Visconti) who might be offered 200,000 ducats for it. The King sends formal notice to the Doge of Venice that Genoa henceforth belongs to the Duke of Milan.

While Louis XI was at Bayonne he was called upon to intervene in the affairs of Savoy, where Duke Louis who was in failing health, had been completely overruled by his wife, Anne de Lusignan, formerly Queen of Cyprus. She was a woman of strong intelligence, but perhaps too much under the influence of ministers from her own country. She had seven daughters, of

whom the eldest was Charlotte, wife of Louis XI, and eight sons. Of these the fifth, Philip of Bresse, was always in rebellion against his parents, and at length he passed all bounds, burst into the chapel of Thonon with his escort while Mass was going on, and killed with his own hands the Duke's *maître d'hôtel*, a knight of St. Jean of Jerusalem. He also seized the Chancellor of Savoy, and in terror of his violence his father and mother made their escape to Geneva, where he pursued them. The unhappy Duchess never recovered from the shock of that awful scene, and died of grief on November 11, 1462. Yolande, the sister of Louis XI, had married the eldest son of the Duke of Savoy, and it was she who appealed to her brother against her brother-in-law Philip. Louis wrote to her at once, asking her to come to Chambéry with her father-in-law, the Duke of Savoy, and he would meet them on his return from Bayonne. He adds: "In regard of what you tell me, that Philip of Savoy is going to Piedmont, and there might be danger, there is none, for wherever he may travel, I have the intention of going to seek him in person, if he does not obey my command sent him by the said 'maréschal'" (Jean de Seyssel, maréschal de Savoie).

Yolande of France is a most interesting personality. She was married at the age of seventeen to Amedée, called "le bienheureux," afterwards Duke of Savoy, and while he spent most of his time in devout meditation, she devoted herself nobly to the affairs of the country. When her husband, whose health was always delicate, wore himself out with mortifications of the flesh and pilgrimages, she ruled as Regent, with heroic courage under the most trying circumstances. This

was not the only occasion when she needed the help of her brother the King of France.

Louis did not waste time; he contrived that his turbulent brother-in-law should be enticed to Chartres and then to Vierzon, where he was told that he was the King's prisoner, and was shut up in the castle of Loches. It was a strong measure which has been much blamed, but the young Prince had leisure to think over the error of his ways during his two years of imprisonment, and later, in 1471, he entered the service of Louis XI and was ever after one of his most faithful friends. Philip had many fine qualities which the King appreciated. He married Marguerite of Bourbon, and his son, Philibert-le-Beau, was the husband of Marguerite of Austria, while his daughter Louise was the mother of Francis I of France.

Several letters of Louis XI have already prepared us for coming troubles between himself and the House of Burgundy; like the far-off rumbling of distant thunder. There were various parties and constant dissensions at the Court of Duke Philip, whose ministers, the Croys, were all powerful with him, but his son, the Count of Charolois, was so bitterly opposed to them, that at last he sullenly withdrew to the castle of Gorcum in Holland. The most serious question in dispute appears to have been the desire of Louis XI to buy back the French towns on the Somme, which by the Treaty of Arras the Duke of Burgundy was bound to return on receipt of 400,000 écus d'or. Ever since his accession, this had been the one definite aim of the King of France, for he saw that there could be no safety for his kingdom while these frontier towns, the necessary defences of the capital, were in the hands of a rival sovereign. An

enormous sum was required, but Louis strained every nerve to obtain it, and we find him writing to all the loyal towns to grant him a subsidy, and on all sides borrowing large sums, which he scrupulously repaid later. Thus he begins his letter to the "consaulx" of Tournay.

"PARIS, 23 *August*, 1463.

"*De par le roy.*

"'Très chiers et bien amez,' for the good and utility of our kingdom, . . . and to replace as best we can the things alienated by our predecessor, as at our anointing and coronation we swore and promised, we have determined presently to buy back and rejoin to our said dominion the towns, places, lands, and lordships of our country of Picardy, which 'feu nostre très chier seigneur et père (que Dieu absoille), bailla à nostre très chier et très-amé oncle le duc de Bourgogne,' for the sum of 400,000 écus, of which sum we have found means to have and take from our own savings, up to 200,000 écus. . . ." And he asks his faithful subjects to help with the remainder.

On September 27, Louis paid a visit to the Duke of Burgundy at his favourite residence, the castle of Hesdin, where the arrangements already made by delegates on both sides were ratified, and the second half of the money was duly paid on October 8. We have full particulars as to the amount raised by the different towns, Tournay showing special zeal by contributing 20,000 écus. The meeting between Louis XI and his uncle appears to have been very friendly, and they even talked about the old Duke setting forth on a crusade which Pius II was eagerly suggesting. Antoine de Croy, who had done so much to smooth the

way for the ransom of the Somme towns, was richly rewarded by the King of France who, as Michelet says, was too poor to buy himself a new hat, and could yet raise so great a sum as 400,000 écus for the sake of his country.

A truce had been made with England, and, with the help of Philip, it was prolonged until May 1, 1464. But Edward is chary of his concessions, for in proclaiming the truce he still calls himself "King of England and of France." Louis wrote from Hesdin to the Duke of Brittany to announce this truce with England, and incidentally remarks that it will be good "for the succour of Christendom and the expulsion of the Turk, enemy of the Faith."

Charles of Burgundy, Count of Charolois, was furious at the result of the negotiations, as he had always strongly opposed the return of the towns of the Somme, and he resolved to make a desperate effort to destroy the influence of the Croys and to turn his father against Louis. He took advantage of the presence of a spy (the Bastard of Rubempré) at Gorcum to persuade the poor old Duke that the King of France had designs on them both, and Philip, in alarm, gave orders for his departure secretly, in the night, to Lille. The Croys were in despair, for the reconciliation, by any means, of Charles and his father would be their ruin.

It is at this point that begin the chronicles of Philip de Commines, who entered the service of Charles Count of Charolois at the age of seventeen. "About three days after my arrival at Lille, the Count d'Eu, the Chancellor of France, Morvilliers, and the Archbishop of Narbonne came there as ambassadors for the

King of France. . . . Morvillier accused the Count of Charolois of having caused a small man-of-war of Dieppe to be seized, in which was the Bastard of Rubempré, whom he also caused to be imprisoned on pretence that his design was to have surprised and carried him to France. . . ." Duke Philip having replied that he would make inquiry, Morvillier complained that Charles of Charolois had conspired with the Duke of Bretagne against the King of France. . . . The next day, Charles, "kneeling on a velvet cushion before his father," made answer to this charge, and defended himself, and the embassy was dismissed with apparent courtesy, although Charles managed to give a Parthian thrust in his farewell words to the Archbishop: "Recommend me very humbly to the good grace of the King, and tell him that 'il m'a fait bien laver' by the Chancellor, but before the year is out he shall repent it." This message was given to the King which "bred a mortal hatred between them," the more so as Charles was very bitter about the redemption of the much disputed towns on the Somme—Amiens, Abbeville, St. Quentin, Roye, Montdidier, Corbie, and others. "The Count of Charolois charged the whole matter upon the house of Croy, and his father being in extreme old age, he drove from the palace the aforesaid lords, and took from them all the places and things which they held in their hands." This would be after the Duke fell ill at Brussels the following March, when his son ruled the duchy, the banished Croys taking refuge in France.

On June 7th, 1464, Louis writes to the Duke of Burgundy—still his "très chier et très amé oncle"—to propose that a conference should be held in Paris on

the 8th September following to settle any difficulties between them. There is also on the same date a letter from him written at Roye (one of the Somme towns) to the Duke of Brittany, announcing that the truce with England has been prolonged until October 1st of the current year. The King writes again a week later to complain that some English vessels have been taken by Breton corsairs in defiance of the truce, and he demands that they shall receive redress and reparation. But the Duke evidently gives some trouble about the matter, for the King has to write five more letters on the subject, pointing out that both as a kinsman and a subject, François of Brittany is included in the truce. However, on the last day of July we find a pardon granted to Jean de Launay, the Breton pirate, who has confessed his fault and made amends. Louis at that moment was extremely anxious to keep on good terms with England, as there was a project of marriage between Edward IV and Bona of Savoy, a young sister of Queen Charlotte, set on foot by the Earl of Warwick. In point of fact, Edward IV had already secretly married for love Elisabeth Woodville, daughter of Jacqueline of Luxembourg, who had been Duchess of Bedford. This was an act of blind imprudence on his part, and probably cost him his throne in the end. He did not acknowledge her publicly as his queen until the following Michaelmas.

His father-in-law, Louis Duke of Savoy, being old and incapable, Louis XI felt himself responsible for arranging the marriages of his wife's sisters, and he now suggested to the Duke of Milan that his son, Galeazzo Maria, should marry Bona of Savoy. After much negotiation this alliance took place some years

afterwards. Her sister Marie became the wife of the Constable of St. Pol. On the 19th of May of this year (1464) a second daughter had been born to Queen Charlotte at Nogent-le-Roi; she received the name of Jeanne, and was at once promised in marriage to the two-year-old son of Charles of Orléans and Marie of Cleves, afterwards Louis XII.

We have now reached a most critical point in the history of Louis XI, when he gradually became aware that a great conspiracy was being formed against him of most of his powerful vassals, with Charles of Burgundy and the dukes of Brittany and Bourbon at its head. It was a time of terrible anxiety and suspense, for although the King could almost watch the league growing under his eyes, he had no certain knowledge as to which of the men whom he had loaded with benefits would remain faithful to him. The attitude of the Duke of Brittany had long been hostile to the King of France, and he would willingly have transferred his allegiance to Edward IV. Meanwhile his Court had become the refuge of all the enemies of Louis XI. The nobles as a class could not forgive his interference with what they considered their rights; they found themselves as much subject to law as the poorest serf; they were called upon to pay all feudal dues and even compelled to bear their share in taxation. The King had actually asserted that hunting was a royal privilege, possibly with the intention of raising money for licences, as well as limiting the injury caused to agriculture and the tyranny inflicted on the peasants by the game-laws.

It is well to mention that Louis himself was so anxious not to give any cause of complaint while enjoying his favourite sport that we find in his accounts such

entries as these: "One crown to a poor man whose dog had been taken; one crown to a poor woman at Vire whose sheep had been strangled by harriers; one crown to another whose goose had been killed near Blois by a dog; one crown to a poor man whose corn had been trampled near le Mans; one crown to a poor woman whose cat had been killed by harriers near Montlouis, in going from Tours to Amboise." Still, we can understand the irritation of a medieval country gentleman when there was any fear of his only pastime, the exclusive privilege of his order, being interfered with. He would be wretched indeed without his hunting, his hounds, and his hawks! We can scarcely wonder that discontent spread far and wide. The clergy, too, had their grievances, and their loyalty could not be relied upon. Louis XI had required from them, on pain of confiscation, an exact account and description of their possessions and of the title by which they were held; and this they felt was threatening and dangerous to their interests. The University of Paris was aggrieved by the creation of provincial universities, and even the Parlement of Paris was indignant that a rival tribunal should have been established at Bordeaux.

The King of France, in his anxiety for peace, summoned a great conference at Tours to discuss the position. The Duke of Burgundy was represented by the Bishop of Tournay and the Sire de Créqui. There were also present Charles Duke of Berry the King's brother, King René Duke of Anjou and Provence, his brother Charles Count of Maine, Charles Duke of Orleans, Jean II, Duke of Bourbon; the counts of Dunois, of Nevers, of Penthièvre, of Boulogne, of Foix,

CHARLES, DUC D'ORLEANS
From an old print

CHARLES THE BOLD, DUKE OF BURGUNDY
From an engraving by F. Bouttats after the portrait by J. Van Eyck

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of St. Pol, and many others. After the Chancellor had opened the meeting, the King made a most eloquent speech. He insisted on the necessity of complete union between himself and the great lords, who were the true columns of the monarchy. They have mutual obligations. . . . He tells the story of his life, his early poverty . . . the kind reception of his uncle, the Duke of Burgundy, to whom he expresses his gratitude. On his accession he had found the country in the deepest poverty. . . . He thanks God that he has been able to raise it to its present state of prosperity; and after Providence, he owes this happiness to the support, the zeal, and the love of the princes of the blood and the nobles. They must help him to support the weight of the crown. What can a prince do without the heart of his subjects? . . . He explains his political aims, and regrets that the Duke of Brittany is not present. . . .

René, King of Sicily, as the doyen of the assembly, was chosen to reply, and his speech was a complete act of submission on behalf of all present; with one voice they added, turning to the King: "We will serve you; we will all live and die with you against the world." So they cried, and yet within a few months they fought against him at Montl'héry!

Louis thanked them for their goodwill, and then the old Duke of Orleans rose and made excuse for his kinsman, the absent Duke of Brittany. He may have argued with poetic inconsequence, that rebellion was no crime, but merely a picturesque assertion of independence. The King in a moment of annoyance, spoke a few sharp words of rebuke, and it so happened that within a fortnight of this occurrence, Charles of Orleans died at the age of seventy-four. Although his end was

by no means premature for a man who had endured so many vicissitudes, who had been taken prisoner at Agincourt and had remaind in captivity for twenty-five years—yet some have attributed his death to grief and mortification. His son Louis, the future King of France, was a child of three, and he also left two daughters; one was Abbess of Fontevrault, and the other married Jean Viscount of Narbonne, and was the mother of Gaston of Orleans. Like René of Anjou, Charles was a poet, and his light rondels give lyrical expression to his own feelings, and are rich with quaint conceits and gems of fancy. His work almost marks an epoch in the literary history of the first dawn of the Renaissance. After his return from his long captivity, he held a Court of song at Blois, amid gay knights and ladies, and light-hearted merry friends such as the vagrant Villon; he took delightful journeys in the glowing springtide of the year; he went floating down the sunny Loire in a barge, playing chess in the pavilion; and as the years glided away, he scarcely noted how the world had changed. He was always ready to plead for a friend who had inadvertently got mixed up with treason, and when in his genial romantic style he took up the defence of the Duke of Brittany at Tours, he never dreamt that the King was in such deadly earnest. So he went homeward, sad and puzzled, somewhat broken with age, and maybe then wrote his courtly farewell: "Saluez moy toute la compagnie"; for so ended his last "melodious rondel."

CHAPTER VI

1465

"Ligue du Bien Public" Against Louis XI—Battle of Montl'héry—Treaty of Conflans—Recovery of Normandy by the King—Friendship of Louis with the Duke of Milan—Anne of France betrothed to Nicholas of Calabria.

At length the blow fell, and the first deadly stroke was from the hand of the King's own brother. Louis XI was at Poitiers, on his way to a pilgrimage at Nôtre Dame du Pont, when on the morning of Monday, March 4, 1465, Charles suggested that he would go hunting instead. The two brothers appeared to be on the most friendly terms, as the young Duke of Berry had just received an addition of 10,000 livres to his pension. Half an hour after the royal party had left, Charles hastily joined the ambassador of the Duke of Brittany: all preparations were made for his flight, and he was soon out of reach of pursuit. The foolish lad of eighteen, vain and frivolous, had been persuaded to join his brother's enemies and put himself at the head of the League "du Bien public" against him.

This cruel desertion took the King by surprise, and was perhaps the most bitter experience of his life, as we find from the many letters which he wrote to announce the flight of Charles Duke of Berry. He tells the

mayors, aldermen, and bourgeois of Amiens, of Rheims, of Abbeville, of Lyons, of Auxerre, of St. Quentin, and many others, and exhorts them all to remain faithful to him, as they have always been and as he puts his trust in them. Yet he was destined to find that in the hour of his deepest need he stood alone in tragic isolation, for the burghers, on whom he relied and for whom he had done so much, maintained a strict neutrality and watched the death-struggle of the Crown with the indifference of mere spectators. Louis had not yet fully realized the extent of the disaster which had come upon him ; for instance, he still believed in the loyalty of the Duke of Bourbon, and wrote thus to him :—

"Mon frère [Jean II had married Jeanne de France, the sister of Louis], lundi, je parti d'icy au matin pour aler fere mon voyage à Nôtre Dame du Pont, et dès que je feuz parti, demye heure après, mon frère de Berry s'en partit sans mon sçeu, et l'en mena Odet d'Aidie, et est alé en Bretaigne, et ne say qui l'a meu à cecy. Or çà, se il a bien fait, il le trouvera. Je vous prie, que sur tout le plaisir et service que jamais me voulez faire, que incontinent ces lettres veues, vous monties à cheval et vous en venez devers moy, et ne me vueillez faillir, et vous prie que faictes mettre sus cent lances de voz pais, et laissez le bastard pour ce faire, et vous en venez incontinent, et quant vos gens seront prestz, je les feray paier, et à Dieu. Escript de ma main. Et croyez Josselin de ce qu'il vous dira de ma part.—LOYS."

(My brother, I set forth from here in the morning on my journey to Nôtre Dame du Pont, and as soon as I had started, half an hour after, my brother of Berry

set off without my knowledge, and was led away by Odet d'Aidie, and is gone to Brittany, and I do not know who has moved him to do this. "Or çà," if he has done well he will find it so. I beg of you, by all the pleasure and service you would ever bestow on me, that immediately on seeing these letters you will mount on horseback and come to me at once, and do not fail me, and I beg of you to make ready a hundred lances of your country, leave the Bastard to do this, but you come at once, and when your men are ready I will have them paid, and Adieu. Written by my hand. And believe Josselin in all that he will tell you from me.—Loys.)

The Duke's reply to this appeal was a public letter, in which he announced that he and the other princes had taken a vow to compel the King to reform the Government and redress the grievances of the nation.

Louis had also written to the Duke of Burgundy, but the old man was now completely under the control of his son Charles, whose only answer to the courtesy of the King of France was at once to demand subsidies from the states of Burgundy, and to order the feudal levies to be under arms by the beginning of May. At the same time news reached Louis that Dammartin had escaped from the Bastille, and with the help of the Bastard of Bourbon, had seized Bourges and was calling the nobles of Berry to arms.

All things were against him, but in the hour of adversity Louis XI always showed true greatness. He at once caused letters to be published through the kingdom, in which he proved how little the princes combined against him had ever cared for "le Bien

public," or for anything but their own interests. The country had been at peace in his reign and trade protected; now it would be laid waste by fire and sword. Doubtless many had been led astray by fine words; let them return to their allegiance within six weeks, and they should have free pardon.

The King then prepared to defend himself against the dangers which threatened on every side. His chief hope was in the difficulties and delays which must attend the combined action of feudal armies, and he lost no time in seeking to secure the defence of Paris, sending two of his most trusted servants, Charles de Melun and Bishop Balue, to see to the fortifications and the garrison. The Count du Maine was to oppose the advance of the Dukes of Brittany and Berry, while Louis himself hoped, with his well-trained "francs-archers" and artillery, to overcome the Duke of Bourbon and the rebels of the south, and then, by a rapid return to the north, to defeat the men of Burgundy before they could join the Bretons. This was excellent strategy; and before the end of May, Louis was in possession of the greater part of the Bourbonnais, of Auvergne, and of Berry; while the provinces of Guienne and Languedoc, also the counts of Foix and Comminges, were loyal, and there was every hope that the royal forces might be concentrated on the Somme before the army of Burgundy had crossed the frontier.

At this critical moment, the unlooked-for treachery of the Duke of Nemours was a terrible blow, and the defection of the Duke of Alençon, Dunois, and above all of Jean of Calabria was enough to crush a weaker man, but Louis rose to the occasion, and with splendid energy he crossed the Allier, took Gannat by storm,

and so alarmed the rebels in that part that they signed a promise to lay down their arms and send envoys to negotiate. But much precious time had been lost; it was no longer possible for the King to meet his foes on the frontiers, and it was very doubtful if he could reach his capital in time to save it.

Meantime Charles Count of Charolois had taken the field with an army of 1400 lances, 8000 archers, and a host of light-armed troops, cross-bowmen and others. The forces of the King could not be more than 14,000 men all told, but they were in splendid discipline and their military experience was far greater than that of the Burgundians, who appear to have met with scarcely any opposition on their way to Paris, as Crèvecœur and Arleux were retaken almost without resistance, and Nesle, Roye, Montdidier, and Brai also surrendered. It is interesting to follow the whole course of this campaign in the letters of Louis XI, who constantly writes to all his captains and gives the most minute directions on every point. At the beginning of June, his sister, Jeanne Duchess of Bourbon, wishes to meet him with her mother-in-law, Agnes of Bourbon, sister of Duke Philip of Burgundy, and the King sends an urgent message to his steward: "Pour ce que je suis maintenant fort ocupé, comme vous savez, je vous prye, si vous me voulez jamès faire service ne plaisir, que vous trouvez fasson, par bonne manière et comme de vous, que ne viengnent point, et s'ilz ont aucune chose à besongner devers moy, qu'ils y envoyent, et que feray tellement qu'ilz devront estre contens. Mès faictes le si sagement, et par telle fasson, qu'ilz ne congnoissent point que j'en sache rien."

This is a very good specimen of the shrewd di-

plomacy of Louis. But his sister was more than a match for him, as she managed to have the interview and tried to make terms for her husband. However, the negotiations came to an abrupt end, and before the end of the month the Duke of Bourbon abruptly joined the King's enemies.

The friendship of Louis with the Duke of Milan proved useful to him now, as his son, Galeazzo Maria Sforza, came to his help with 1000 lances and 2000 archers, and was appointed lieutenant of the King in Lyonnais and Dauphiné. Having made all arrangements for the security of these provinces, the royal army proceeded on its march to Paris. One of his most devoted captains, Joachim Rouhault, entered the city with 110 lances, only just in time, as the army of Burgundy had already reached St. Denis, and the arrival of the dukes of Brittany and Berry was hourly expected. The King's army had approached by forced marches, but his wish was to avoid a battle if possible, and to throw himself into his capital. However, he found that Charles of Burgundy had already crossed the Oise and would seek to bar his way. Louis sent repeated orders to Charles de Melun, the Governor of Paris, to send out men and threaten the enemy's rear, but his action was so weak and cowardly at the critical moment that there can be little doubt of his treachery. Indeed, in that hour of peril the King knew not whom he could trust, for his dearest friend might betray him at any moment.

Under these circumstances was fought the famous battle of Montl'héry, on Tuesday, July 16, 1465, "when the two hosts both fancied themselves beaten." So many different accounts have been given of this en-

gagement that we may select the story told by Louis XI himself, his own war correspondent, from the various letters he at once wrote to his chief cities: Lyons, Amboise, Beauvais, Poitiers, Troyes, and others.

"*De par le roy.*

CORBEIL, 17 *Juillet*, 1465.

"'Chiers et bien amez,' yesterday, at about two hours after dinner, the counts of Charolois, of St. Pol, Atof of Cleves . . . and all their men of war, being near Montl'héry, fortified by their chariots, 'fossez, ribaudequins,' and other artillery, we were advised to assail and combat them, and so it was done. And thanks to God, we had the better of it, and the victory was for us, and two or three times the said Count of Charolois fled and the greater part of his men, and the said Count of St. Pol . . . and we remained on the field till the setting sun, and then came to Corbeil, and our army. . . .

"(Paris, July 20.) There were fourteen or fifteen hundred dead, and three or four hundred prisoners, and afterwards more than two thousand dead or taken who fled towards the bridge of St. Cloud. We have also recovered our town of Lagny, and the bridge of St. Maxence (on the Oise), where four or five hundred were taken or killed; whence the counts of Charolois and St. Pol have departed and have burnt a great number of their chariots. And afterwards we retired to this our good city of Paris, where the greater part of our men-at-arms and captains of war have joined us . . . and the said Charolois has retired to join our brother of Berry and the Bretons, who are disposed to draw towards the marches of Normandy. . . ." The

King bids his faithful subjects make good defence and he will come to their help.

From other sources we learn that Charles of Burgundy was in great danger at one time; he was wounded in the throat and only saved by the gallant devotion of one of his esquires. But the fortune of war changed, and the King—who was now almost in sole command, as Pierre de Brézé was killed—had a narrow escape, as his reserve sent by Charles de Melun forsook him and fled. Commines remarks at this point that "the greatest thing in the world for battles is to have thousands of archers. In a small number, they are of no use." It was the Scotch guard which escorted the King to the castle of Montl'héry, while Charles of Burgundy remained on the field of battle in great anxiety, expecting another attack at any moment, and at daybreak he set off towards Étampes. The battle of Montl'héry was a very doubtful triumph for either side, although the losses of the men of Burgundy were much greater than those of Louis, who was successful in his plan of entering Paris. Those who fled from both armies spread reports, on one side that Charles was killed, and on the other that the King of France was slain or captured.

When the defences of Paris were well secured, Louis wrote at once to convoke the nobles and "francs-archers" from the counties which were faithful to him and to his good cities of Rheims, of Troyes, of Abbeville, Lyons, and others, to see well to their garrisons and to be of good cheer. He also made the Count d'Eu Governor of Paris, and appointed Charles de Melun Captain of Evreux and Honfleur. We have no means of knowing how far he was then under

suspicion. Meantime, the Count of Charolois and the dukes of Brittany and Berry had united their forces at Étampes, but already there was distrust and jealousy amongst them, and Charles of Berry aroused the contempt of his more hardened companions by deploring the number of wounded and slain in this war. However, all the princes left Étampes together in outward amity, and after some delay they crossed the Seine by a bridge of boats, and were scarcely encamped when Jean Duke of Calabria arrived with a good body of horse, a small company of Italians in complete armour, four hundred cross-bow men from the Count Palatine, and five hundred Swiss infantry, the first seen in France. Louis had made a last attempt to recall his old friend Jean to his allegiance, and his father René had also written a touching letter recalling all that the King had done for him. But the Duke of Calabria was too much involved to draw back now, and he was also greatly attracted by the reckless courage of Charles of Burgundy.

On August 10, Louis had gone to Normandy to collect forces there, and his combined enemies lost no time in trying to persuade the citizens to submission. A deputation headed by the Bishop went to Beauté-sur-Marne, and they were disposed to agree that the princes should be admitted into the city with a small escort. This would have been a fatal move, and the Count d'Eu made so formidable a demonstration with his men-at-arms, that the envoys were obliged to put off any decision until the good pleasure of the King should be known. On the 28th August, Louis returned from Normandy, after seventeen days absence, with twelve thousand men, some artillery, sixty

chariots of powder, and seven hundred muids (one muid is about fifty bushels) of flour. The King was received with the greatest acclamations, and the besieged were now able to make sorties and capture prisoners. The experience of Louis at Montl'héry made him unwilling to risk a general engagement, and he was quite willing to listen to terms of peace. But the allies made exorbitant demands, such as giving the Duke of Berry Guienne with Saintonge and Poitou, or Normandy, and even after a personal interview between Louis and Charles of Burgundy all hope of settlement was given up.

As the days passed on, the situation became more serious. The country round Paris was laid waste by the beleaguering army, more especially by the ill-paid and rapacious bands of Armagnac and Nemours; while the presence of so many soldiers in Paris was a severe trial to the inhabitants. News of treachery constantly arrived; one day it was that Pontoise had been sold by its governor, another that the gates of the Bastille had been left open and the canon spiked. Fortunately the watch had been doubled, and fires had been lighted in the streets to guard against a night surprise—contrary to the advice of Charles de Melun, whose father was in command of the Bastille. On September 27, there came tidings that Rouen had been betrayed by the widow of Pierre de Brézé, and the gates opened to the Duke of Bourbon; Caen had yielded after three days of siege. . . . Disasters everywhere.

"Entre tous les princes que j'ai cognus, le plus saige pour se tirer d'un mauvais pas, c'était le roi Louis XI nostre maître," says Commines. The King knew when

to yield; he bent low before the storm, and resolved to make peace at any price. "Il aima mieux éteindre le feu de cette division du 'Bien Public' par l'argent, que dans le sang et dans les larmes de ses sujets." Charles of Burgundy was quite willing to treat with him, for his army was ill-supplied with provisions, and there was ever-growing discord amongst the allies. The soldiers were in constant expectation of attack, and there is a legend of their mistaking a field of tall thistles for a company of hostile lances. A truce was proclaimed on October 1st, and the rest of the month was spent in negotiations. The story is told of a meeting between the two Princes under the walls of Paris, when Charles found that he had inadvertently placed himself in the power of Louis, who took no advantage of it. But this incident is not well authenticated.

One treaty was signed at St. Maur, and another at Conflans; almost all the demands of the confederates appear to have been granted, and we are amazed at the concessions to which Louis submitted. Every traitor appears to be richly rewarded in lands, honours, and money for his evil doing.

The Duke of Berry receives the duchy of Normandy . . . and other concessions.

Charles of Burgundy receives Amiens and the other towns on the Somme which Louis had recently made such tremendous sacrifices to buy back; all the lands of Ponthieu and Vimeu . . . ; also Péronne, Roye, Boulogne, and Montdidier.

The Duke of Calabria receives Mouzon, Sainte-Menéhould, Neufchatel, and other estates, besides 1,000,000 écus d'or. Also on his account the King

renounces his alliance with Metz and with Ferdinand of Aragon.

The Duke of Brittany receives the counties of Étampes and Montfort, and the sovereign rights which he claims.

The Duke of Bourbon receives several lordships in Auvergne, 100,000 écus, the pay of 300 lances, and other concessions.

The Duke of Nemours receives the government of Paris and the Isle-de-France, a pension, and the pay of 200 lances.

The Count of St. Pol is appointed Constable of France.

The counts of Armagnac, of Dunois, of Dammartin, and many other rebels recover all their places and possessions, with large gifts of money.

As for the "Bien Public," which was supposed to be the cause of the rebellion, a clause is inserted that a commission shall be appointed to inquire into abuses that they may be remedied by new edicts.

If the unfortunate people of France had formed any expectations from this league of "le Bien Public," they were cruelly undeceived when they found that all these extortionate claims of the nobles would have to be paid by their taxes. The King made no vain complaints; he behaved to his triumphant foes with quiet courtesy, and bore with silent courage the apparent ruin of all his hopes for the unity and greatness of his kingdom. The grasping crew of rebels hastily dispersed to take possession of their gains, with no aim in common but to found so many isolated despotisms, where they would be petty sovereigns independent of all control.

Louis had signed the treaty extorted from him under

a solemn protest, while the Parliament and the Chambre des Comptes protested that Normandy was the inalienable appanage of the Crown, and that they only registered the illegal treaty under compulsion. The men of Burgundy were, however, the first to break the conventions by surprising Péronne and taking the Count of Nevers prisoner; they also summoned Beauvais to surrender, whereupon the Bishop, Jean de Bar, and the bourgeois sent the written summons to the King, who showed it to Charles of Burgundy: "Since we have made peace, you no doubt agree with me that we must observe it," was his remark. On the 21st of October we find him writing to the men of Liége and sending a special ambassador to tell them of the peace and beg them to cease all hostilities. He well knows what "dear and special friends" they have been to him "et de très bon cœur vous en mercions. Toutesvoyes veu que l'appoinctement est prins entre nous et . . . bel oncle de Bourgoingne et beau frère de Charolois, et que audit appoinctement (vous) estes comprins comme noz bons especiaulx amis, et comme nous avons fait à tous noz autres alliez et adhérens, nous vous prions que vueilliez déporter et *désister de la guerre* que avez encommenchié ès pais de nosdiz oncle et beau-frère. Et, quant ainsy ne se feroit, veu que de present la guerre cesse par deça, et qu'il y a appoinctemens entre nous et les dessusdiz, seroit à doubter que grosse armée et puissance de gens tombast sur vostre pais, dont grans inconveniens pourroient ensuir, et à quoi seroit difficile chose à vous de y resister, et à nous de vous y secourir. Pourquoy vueilliez avoir sur ce bon avis et accepter de vostre part ledit appoinctement, ainsy que plus à plain avons

chargié le sire de Saincte Camelle de vous dire et exposer. Donné à Paris, le XXIe jour d'octobre.—LOYS."

(We thank you with all our heart. . . . Seeing that a treaty is made between our fair uncle of Burgundy and our brother-in-law of Charolois, and that you are *included in the said treaty* as our good and special friends [Art. I of Treaty of Conflans says: "all hostilities will cease between the said lords, their vassals, and their allies and adherents of whatever condition they are, within the kingdom and without . . ."], as we have done to our other allies and adherents, we beg that you will draw back and *desist from the war* which you have begun in the land of our said uncle and brother-in-law. And in case this is not done, seeing that at present the war ceases over here, and that there is a treaty between us and the aforesaid, it is to be feared that a great army and power of men will fall upon your land, from which great inconvenience may ensue, and which it will be a difficult thing for you to resist and for us to help you in so doing. Wherefore I pray you to take this good advice and accept on your part the said treaty, as we have charged the Sire de Camelle more plainly to tell and explain to you. Given at Paris, the 21st October.—LOYS.)

"A nos très grans, anchiens et especiaulz amis les maistres jurez et conseil de la cité et païs de Liége."

We see that it was not for lack of warning that the men of Liége continued their opposition to the Duke of Burgundy. Had they only listened to the wise advice given in this letter, they would not have drawn down upon themselves the terrible vengeance of Charles of Burgundy, two years later.

On October 30, after the King had received homage from his brother Charles at Vincennes for the duchy of Normandy, the peace was proclaimed in Paris at ten o'clock at night in these words: "Between the King, Monsieur Duke of Normandy, and other princes of the blood, as well for their followers and *their allies* on both sides, the war ceases; peace is made. . . ." Charles of Burgundy departed at once, and was well received everywhere in France by the King's orders; he hastened to take possession of the towns of Picardy, to their great discontent; and without going to see his father, Duke Philip, who was in failing health, or his young daughter Marie, whose mother had died during his absence, he at once proceeded to attack the men of Liége.

Meantime Louis was fully occupied in carrying out the various concessions he had promised, making changes in the Government, settling about the taxes, giving a fresh charter to Paris, and rewarding his faithful followers, to one of whom, Louis de Bourbon, he gave his illegitimate daughter Jeanne in marriage. The King was at Orleans at the end of November when he received a message from his brother Charles, who complained of his position in his new dukedom. Louis turned to the Duke of Bourbon who was with him, and remarked that he should be obliged to give help to his brother, "perhaps even to take back that duchy of Normandy." This is what had happened. Besides the general discontent at being separated from France, there was discord between the Normans and Bretons, while every one was full of ambitious hopes of place and power, which it was impossible for the young Duke to satisfy. The people of Rouen were told that

Charles was a prisoner in the hands of François of Brittany, and they sallied out in force to rescue him, whereupon the indignant Bretons took possession of the chief towns of Lower Normandy: Caen, Bayeux, Coutances, Avranches, and others. This was the King's opportunity, and after endowing Masses at the cathedral, he left Orleans and went to Chartres, but he did not keep an appointment which he made to meet his brother at Louviers. Thomas Basin, Bishop of Lisieux (afterwards his chronicler and one of his most bitter enemies), was with Charles, having been one of the first to pay homage to him. Louis reached Caen on December 19, and a few days later concluded a private treaty with the Duke of Brittany, in which François promises not to receive or help any malcontents, and to remain neutral on receipt of 150,000 écus. "All that the King loves, we will love; all that displeases him, will displease us . . .," said the Duke.

Louis XI on his side made other concessions; his plans were already arranged for this great purpose, the re-conquest of Normandy, and while awaiting the rest of his army he marched to Louviers, which surrendered to him on the most favourable conditions. From this city he wrote on January 4 to the Vicomte de Conches, to order a supply of "houectes et piquois" (hoes and spades) and a number of workmen and pioneers, who will be duly paid. "Take care that you do not fail, inasmuch as you fear to displease us and incur our indignation." On the next day, the King writes to his good subjects of Lyons to justify to them his occupation of Normandy. The letter is extremely interesting, but it is too long to quote in full. He begins by speaking of the "divisions

and differences" in the kingdom, how he was compelled to give up the duchy of Normandy to his brother Charles, many of the cities and fortresses having been already usurped; greatly against his will, and the ordonnance and constitutions of the Kings of France he had yielded it, for never had brother of a king received that duchy. . . . At his coronation he had sworn to protect the rights of the Crown, and had always meant to restore to it the duchy, from which it should never be parted, as he had made express protestation at the time of the treaty. For these causes . . . he had been advised by men of note, princes of the blood, and others to enter Normandy, and to restore to the Crown of France its lawful property. . . . "Having come to the said land of Normandy, in the greater part we have been received with all obedience by the inhabitants, as natural sovereign and rightful lord, and we hope so to pursue the thing, by the help of God, that it may be fully accomplished." Then Louis adds that, as some people might be surprised (*esmerveillés*), he thought it well to write to all the chief towns of the kingdom and explain his conduct. Also with regard to his brother, he intends to give him a "grant, bon et notable appanage," greater than any only brother of a king has ever had, with which he ought to be content. . . . .

Charles of France, deserted by the Duke of Brittany, appealed to Charles of Burgundy, whose ambassadors readily received the King's explanations. Louis offered his brother the county of Roussillon, where he would be at a safe distance from his confederates, and while Charles was considering this, the gates of Rouen were

opened to the King on the promise of a free pardon, from which only six of the leading rebels were excepted. Normandy was now completely recovered, and proclamation was made that it was once more and inseparably united to the Crown of France. In this campaign the King showed clemency to many who had opposed him: even the widow of Pierre de Brézé, who had betrayed Rouen, was forgiven. But he was implacable against those who still thought to deceive him; some were beheaded and others drowned in the Loire. The castle of Chaumont, belonging to Pierre d'Amboise, who had joined the League, was burnt and levelled with the ground, but when Pierre made due submission, the King built up his castle again with his own money.

Charles of France, who had found a retreat with the Duke of Brittany, refused Roussillon, and asked for Champagne and le Vermandois, or else the duchy of Berry with Poitou and Saintonge. He was a foolish incapable young fellow, who took advantage of his brief reign in Normandy to waste a large sum of public money in luxury and dissipation. He persistently appealed for help to Charles of Burgundy, who sent another embassy, to whom Louis pointed out that Liége and Dinant ought to profit by the treaty of Conflans, as it included the allies on both sides, and that to attack those cities was to violate the peace. (Was he not aware that he had done so himself, in re-conquering Normandy?) Louis had just cause of complaint against his uncle the Comte du Maine, who had secretly taken part with the Duke of Nemours, and had been more than suspected of treachery at Montl'héry. His brother, René of Anjou,

pleaded for him in vain; he was deprived of the government of Languedoc, which was given to the Duke of Bourbon. As for Charles de Melun, he was tried before the highest court in the land, and found guilty of death for high treason.

The King returned to Orleans, where Queen Charlotte was residing, before the beginning of March 1466, and we find him turning aside from the troubles of his throne, to write asking the Duke of Milan to procure for him five or six little dogs from the island of Chios, either white or red, as he hears they are excellent with birds. The merchant house of Justiniana does business in those parts and might obtain them. This appears to be the last letter which he wrote to his old friend Francesco Sforza, who died on March 8; and we have later a number of letters addressed by the King to various Italian states,—to Milan, to Genoa, to Florence, Bologna, and Siena, to the Marquess of Ferrara, of Montferrat, and of Mantua,—all expressing his deep regret at the death of the Duke of Milan, and trusting that all help will be given towards the peaceful succession of his son. But the next news which Louis receives is that Galeazzo Maria Sforza, when on his way home to claim his duchy, was arrested at the foot of the Alps, at Novalese, by order of the Abbé of Casanova. His imprisonment cannot however, have lasted long, as, on March 24, Louis writes to congratulate him on his freedom, "car c'cest la chose que avions plus à cœur, et que désirions le plus." He soon after gives orders to the Treasurer of Dauphiné to pay the troops of the Duke of Milan the sum of 6000 livres (instead of 4000 as originally settled).

Duke Louis of Savoy had been succeeded by his son, Amedée IX, whose wife Yolande, the sister of Louis XI, took part at this time with the House of Burgundy. We find her sending the Abbé de Casanova to the Venetians and the Marquess of Montferrat, to induce them to make war on the new Duke of Milan; and for this her brother reproaches her. In the next letter he begs her to take into her service a certain Antoine de Romagnano, doctor of law, who had obtained the freedom of Galeazzo of Milan and the passage of his troops through Savoy. The King of France is unwearied in his efforts to help the Duke of Milan, for he writes again on his behalf to the Doge of Venice, and to the Pope, Paul II.

Having made peace with the Duke of Calabria, Louis cannot do enough to win him entirely to his cause. To show his esteem for the House of Anjou and his gratitude to René, who had stood by him so faithfully, he now renews and ratifies the treaty of marriage between his eldest daughter, Anne of France, now five years old, and Nicholas, the son of Jean of Calabria. The young bride was to receive a dowry of 487,500 livres, of which 137,500 had already been paid by her father. But the marriage never came to pass, for the Prince of Calabria died in his youthful prime at Nancy on July 27th, 1473.

The Count of Saint-Pol is rewarded by the hand of Marie of Savoy, the Queen's sister, and the countship of Eu is also bestowed upon him. We are struck by the minute personal care which Louis gives to small matters, when he has all the cares of the realm upon him. He writes, for instance, to the city of Amboise to request that a most hospitable reception should be

given to the Countess of Wurtemburg, the Queen's aunt, who is going on a pilgrimage to St. James of Compostella. The old account-books of Amboise show that the lady arrived with fifty-seven horsemen, and she was entertained in the hostel on the bridge for a day and a night, "receiving grapes, apples, and pears of the said city," at the expense of 18 livres, 10 sols tournois, duly paid to Perrenelle, the landlady.

CHAPTER VII

1465-7

THE STORY OF LIÉGE—THE "PITEOUS PEACE"—SIEGE AND DESTRUCTION OF DINANT BY THE DUKE OF BURGUNDY—DEATH OF PHILIP OF BURGUNDY—BATTLE OF ST. TRON—SUBMISSION OF LIÉGE.

WHEN Charles of Burgundy rode away triumphant from the walls of Paris after the Treaty of Conflans, which had given him more than he had ever dared to expect, the next desire of his heart was to punish the men of Liége for their invasion of Namur and Brabant during his absence. "Quant nous aurons fait icy, nous irons de plus belle contre ces vilains Liégois," writes his secretary. The Count of Charolois crossed Champagne and Hainault, gathering fresh levies on the way, until, when he reached the hill country of Liége, his army is said to have numbered 28,000 men-at-arms.

What was this free and sovereign city which had thus presumed to defy the might of the great Lord of Burgundy? The whole story of Liége in medieval times is one long romance—too often passing into tragedy. Standing in the midst of an amphitheatre of rugged hills, which enclose lovely valleys and vast tracts of forests, the ancient city looks down upon a noble river, the Meuse, which here receives the tribute

"GOOD KING RENÉ," DUKE OF PROVENCE, ANJOU, ETC.

From a portrait in the British Museum

To face p. 120

of its vassal streams. But Liége did not owe its greatness to its picturesque situation. In earlier days it had risen under the protection of its patron saint, for the tomb of St. Lambert had been a shrine of pilgrimage until the modest chapel raised in his honour, had grown into a stately fane. But Liége chiefly owed its early fame and importance to the mineral treasures beneath its soil, for iron and coal were found close at hand and were the source of its industry and wealth. It was an ecclesiastical state, which could never pass by marriage, inheritance, or purchase, under the nominal rule of a Prince-Bishop, with a chapter of sixty canons mostly of noble birth. Yet in the fifteenth century never was any municipal government so absolutely democratic as that of Liége, where all native-born citizens above the age of fifteen had the right of suffrage and were eligible to hold office.

All were equal, the smaller guilds and the greater, the merchant, the artisan, and the miner; the vote of the apprentice had the same value as that of the master. The Prince-Bishop himself—originally elected by the Chapter or nominated by the Pope—had only a limited and well-defined jurisdiction. "A Prince of Liége makes no change in the laws without the consent of the estates, and administers justice only by the regular tribunals." Can anything sound more perfect than this? And yet we are told that the different powers and interests were always in conflict, that the turbulent spirit of the masses kept the city in perpetual agitation, and that "civil war might almost be considered the normal condition of society."

We know Michelet's poetical description of the men of Ghent, another free, self-governed town: "l'ouvrier

mystique, le lollard illuminé, le tisserand visionnaire, echappé des caves, pale et hâve, comme ivre de jeûne. . . . Une bannière de métier apparait . . . un son lugubre . . . and the great bell of the city tolls 'Roland! Roland! Roland!', all take arms from the boy of twenty to the old man of sixty, and in their passionate love of their country, "ce grand peuple dans leur simplicité héroique . . . alla à la mort . . . vendu, trahi. . . ." This description gives us an insight into the patriotism which was a passion, a religion, with these bourgeois for the city which was their own, their home, their hearth, and for whose dear sake they would all die as one man. Such fanatics in their devotion would never be easy to govern.

The Prince-Bishop of Liége was the vassal of the Emperor, but the people had long considered the kings of France their friends and protectors. In France they found a market for their work; and a closer resemblance in race and language than they did with their Flemish neighbours. Charles VII had made alliance with them and Louis XI renewed it; and it was in a measure for this reason that they had invaded Namur and Brabant when Charles of Burgundy was before the gates of Paris. We have already seen in the letter sent them by a special ambassador, how urgently Louis tried to persuade them as early as October 21 to make peace at once with the Duke of Burgundy, but in their pride and self-confidence they delayed until it was too late. At the present time, they were extremely unfortunate in their Bishop. Of late years, owing to the increasing power of the Duke of Burgundy, the see had become a benefice at his disposal, and in 1456, after the forced resignation of Jean

de Heinsberg, he had appointed his nephew, Louis of Bourbon, a dissolute lad of eighteen, who at the time was not even in orders, but was nevertheless inducted into the temporalities, and enthroned, when he arrived at Liége in a scarlet suit and plumed cap.

Utterly reckless of the city's dismay and indignation, young Bourbon drove the staid burghers nearly wild with his extortions and his insolent defiance of all their rights. As soon as he met with opposition he withdrew to the border town of Huy, where he gave himself up to every form of self-indulgence and dissipation, and not content with this, he dared to use the last thunderbolt of the Church and place the capital under an interdict. In vain the citizens, in wrath and despair, appealed to the Archbishop of Cologne, to the Pope himself; the powerful influence of the Duke of Burgundy was against them, and the sentence of excommunication was confirmed. Can we wonder that after this, the men of Liége looked upon Duke Philip as their deadly foe, that they rose against him at the first opportunity, when their industry was ruined, their Government was paralysed, and their souls and bodies in equal danger? It can scarcely have needed any persuasion from their ally the King of France, to induce them to invade and devastate the lands of Burgundy.

It so chanced that another city was still more guilty in the eyes of the Duke of Burgundy. Dinant, only second in importance to Liége, stood on the right bank of the Meuse, where it forms the frontier of Namur; while on the opposite bank was placed the town of Bouvines, its rival in trade, and for years past its bitter enemy. As war was now raging on the frontier,

Dinant and Bouvines took advantage of it to attack and annoy each other more than usual. One day a troop of idle apprentices and other such rabble, crossed the river from Dinant with a stuffed figure which in mockery they declared to be "your Count of Charolois, no count indeed, but the base-born son of Bishop Heinsberg"; and they left the effigy hanging on a gibbet by the town walls. This was reported by the loyal subjects of Bouvines to their suzerain the Duke of Burgundy, who never forgave the insult and vowed a deadly vengeance on the whole city for the escapade of a few reckless youths.

As far as Dinant was concerned, the war to them was simply the carrying on of an ancient feud against the rival town which was always giving them fresh provocation. The people of Bouvines now retaliated by hurling an effigy of the French King over the walls of their foe, with insulting words; but although Louis heard of this, he took no notice, for he appears never to have punished a personal insult.

Meantime the great army of the Count of Charolois had entered the territory of Liége, and it was doubtful which city he would first attack. In point of fact, he sought rather to threaten and overawe his enemies, as now in December, it was too late in the year for a long siege, and his men-at-arms, long behindhand in their pay, had been already kept in the field for months beyond the term of feudal service. Charles therefore showed himself willing to make a treaty, and the terror-stricken men of Liége agreed at last to the most exorbitant terms. The chief magistrates and others were to prostrate themselves before the Duke, an indemnity of more than 400,000 florins was to be paid;

Liége was to renounce all its alliances, and accept the Duke of Burgundy as sole protector of Liége, and behave in other ways like a conquered province. We cannot wonder that in the city registers, this bears the title of the "Piteous Peace," of which the last and most cruel stipulation is that Dinant shall be excepted. This treaty was ratified on January 24, 1466, and Charles returned in triumph to his father's Court.

The Count of Charolois had already heard about the surrender of Normandy to the King of France, and during the following months he became alarmed and irritated on hearing that negotiations were going on between Louis and the Earl of Warwick. We find from a letter of the King in April, that Charles had been spreading reports in Amiens and elsewhere that Louis was about to make war upon him. Louis had also written in May to inform the city of Lyons that he was in communication with Warwick only to counteract the danger of a marriage between Charles of Burgundy and Margaret of York, sister of Edward IV. (This marriage actually took place on July 15, 1468.) Charles now wrote an angry letter to the King of France accusing him of offering Rouen, Caux, Abbeville, and the county of Ponthieu to the English as the price of their help against Burgundy. Louis left the Royal Commission to make answer and remind Charles that he had seen all the documents, and to ask who had sent information so false and injurious to the King's honour. Charolois evidently wanted a pretext of any kind, as he was about to march in force against Dinant and also Liége, where the extreme party had risen in rebellion, beheaded the chief men responsible for the "Piteous Peace," and refused to carry out its

conditions. Louis XI has been blamed by his enemies for not taking arms to defend these unfortunate cities, but under all the circumstances it is difficult to see what he could have done at this moment. He was also in close alliance with the Duke of Bourbon, the brother of the unworthy Bishop of Liége, whose cause the Duke of Burgundy was supporting against his rebellious subjects.

In the fifteenth century, Dinant was the site of a flourishing town whose inhabitants were famous throughout Europe for copper-work, not only producing beautiful organ screens, fonts, and ecclesiastical vessels, but pots and pans for kitchen use, called "Dinanderie." They had a large trade with England, where they enjoyed the same privileges as the Hanseatic League. Behind its massive walls defended by eighty towers, rose many fine churches and rich monasteries, while the great foundries were ever at work to add to the wealth of "illud superbum et opulentum Dinantum," as Basin calls it. Aware of its exposed situation on the frontier, Dinant had with difficulty been persuaded to join with Liége against the Duke of Burgundy. When that unfortunate incident occurred under the walls of Bouvines, the ringleaders were at once imprisoned, but with the help of the rabble they made their escape. When, in the spring of 1466, news arrived that a powerful Burgundian army was collecting, the chief magistrates made every effort to avert the coming storm. During the two months of suspense which followed, ceaseless prayers and entreaties were sent by the panic-struck town to every one who might possibly help or plead for them. At last, in desperation, they ventured to send a direct appeal to "the most ex-

cellent, high, and puissant prince, and most redoubted lord, the Count of Charolois; the poor humble and obedient servants and subjects of the most reverend father in God, Louis of Bourbon, Bishop of Liége, and 'vous petis voisins et marchissans,' the burgomasters, council, and people of the town of Dinant. . . ." They offered to make any redress for the insult, and any atonement, with the most abject humility; but all was of no avail. In this last dire extremity, they also appealed to Louis XI, but we find no record of any reply.

The difficulties of the magistrates increased daily, for they found their authority set aside by the class who were ever ready to rebel, and, worst danger of all, the town began to fill with outlawed bands of proscribed exiles, utterly lawless and reckless. In a few registers of Dinant which have been preserved, we find allusion to this peril: "Nous faisons grans doubtes que ne puissons estre maistres du grant nombre d'estraingers qui sont icy soubz umbre d'estre envoyés de par la cité pour la garde de la ville. . . ."

On the 14th of August, Duke Philip of Burgundy arrived in a horse-litter at Namur, where the invading army was to muster. He had been at death's door, but when he recovered his faculties, one memory, one purpose was alone engraved upon his mind. The inexpiable crime of Dinant still remained unpunished, and the last effort of his failing life should be to carry out the deadly vengeance he had sworn. Attended by a small escort, he made his way as far as Bouvines from whence he could watch the fulfilment of his object. The army of his son had crossed the river at Namur and continued its course on the right bank of the river

towards the doomed city. Within the walls there was a reign of terror and all was riot and disorder, for the outlaws, accustomed to live by violence, had taken complete possession supported by the lowest of the populace, and many of the wise rulers who had counselled submission were put to death.

The siege actually began on Tuesday, August 19, after the "bombards" or siege ordnance had been brought into position, and the usual summons by trumpet call had been met with insulting jeers and defiance from the ruffians who crowded the walls. They were answered by the roar of artillery which continued an almost incessant fire for several days, until the churches were dismantled of their towers, the houses in ruins, hundreds of the citizens slain, and a breach sixty feet long had been opened in the walls. Now that all hope was at an end, the outcasts and freebooters only thought of their own safety and fled like evil birds of prey to the distant forest, leaving the unfortunate inhabitants to their fate. The passage of the river above the town was still free, and other fugitives escaped to spread dismay and rage amongst the allied towns, when it was too late for help. The beleaguered city had already offered to capitulate, but had met with a stern refusal, and now, to avert the final assault, surrendered at discretion, in the delusive hope of mercy from the great lords of Burgundy.

The tragedy which followed is too terrible for words: "le mardy, le mercredy et le jeudy on ne feit que butiner"; the order was given in cold blood, and for three days Dinant was sacked by a reckless soldiery which murdered all who dared to resist. Only the women were spared and protected by supreme order of

the Count de Charolois, but it was a cruel clemency which drove them with their children helpless and penniless from their ruined homes, and we are told that their cries were heart-rending. The survivors amongst their husbands and brothers were doomed to slavery ; but Commines, an eye-witness, tells us that the vindictive old Duke feasted his eyes upon a *noyade* of eight hundred men, selected as the most guilty, who, bound hand and foot and tied together in pairs, were drowned in the Meuse. As for the ill-fated city, it was set on fire, and all that was not consumed by the flames was demolished and razed to the ground, until "those who looked upon the place where it stood, could say 'cy fust Dynant !'"

Before the work of destruction was quite complete, Charles of Burgundy received word that the men of Liége were advancing against him ; his men, laden with booty, were scarcely prepared to meet a sudden attack, but the caution of the citizens lost them their opportunity, and they agreed to make terms on the former conditions, with an additional fine and fifty hostages given up as surety. It seems that the Count de St. Pol, who had not scrupled to share in the spoil of Dinant, had pleaded for leniency towards the men of Liége, the allies of the King of France and under his protection. He himself was playing a curious double game.

The old Duke Philip of Burgundy had enjoyed his last triumph when he watched the work of vengeance from the walls of Bouvines, and he was carried home to Bruges where, in preparation for his latter end, he devoted himself to religious duties and lingered on until the following June. He is known to history

as "The Good," but perhaps never was this epithet less deserved if we consider his passionate vindictive temper, and the moral character of one who "a peuplé son pays de bâtards." He had a splendid funeral in the church of St. Donatus, in the midnight blaze of 1600 torches, while the heralds broke their bâtons above the bier and proclaimed his son Charles, Duke of Burgundy, of Brabant, of Limbourg, and of Luxemburg; Count of Flanders, of Artois, of Burgundy, of Hainault, of Holland, of Zeeland, and of Namur; Marquis of the Holy Empire; Lord of Friesland, of Malines. . . .

Soon after his accession the new Duke of Burgundy set forth in state to make his "joyeuse entrée" into Ghent and receive the homage of Flanders. All went well on his arrival, and Charles was received with due honours, but unfortunately it chanced to be the festival time of St. Liévin, and the next day, Monday, June 29, when the relics of the saint were brought back from the scene of his martyrdom, crowds of drunken revellers accompanied them and made a disturbance in the town, shouting, "Down with the *cueillotte*," an objectionable tax like the *octroi* of France, which had been imposed on Ghent at its last rebellion. The Duke, followed by a few nobles, rode out angrily into the midst of the mob and struck one of the men with his bâton. A tumult was with difficulty averted amongst the stubborn and turbulent people; Charles addressed them from a balcony and promised to listen to their grievances, which were at once insolently enumerated by "a tall rude villain," and the Duke had no option save to grant all that was asked. He had most unwisely brought his young daughter Marie with him and also

much treasure of jewels and plate, so that his only anxiety was to carry them away in safety from his mutinous subjects. The success of Ghent encouraged the burghers of Malines, Antwerp, and other places to resist their lord's authority, while the men of Liége had once more risen in arms against their Bishop.

Louis XI now sent the Count of Dammartin and the Duke-Bishop of Langres as his ambassadors to mediate between Liége and the Duke. The unfortunate burghers had found it impossible to pay the immense fine, for the clergy and the adherents of the Bishop and the Duke declared that they were exempt. Liége also insisted that the town of Huy, where the Bishop had taken up his abode, should pay its share of the money. As this demand was refused, the citizens of Liége took up arms and marched to besiege Huy, in utter disregard of the French ambassadors' advice. Charles had sent a company of men-at-arms to defend the town, but Louis of Bourbon induced the captain to use them as an escort to conduct him safely to Brussels, leaving Huy to its fate. When news of this cowardly behaviour reached the Duke, he was furious, and his rage was directed against Liége, which he vowed to crush to the dust. In vain the Papal Legate interceded on their behalf as well as the fresh ambassadors, Cardinal Balue and the Constable St. Pol, sent by the King of France. All their entreaties were in vain, and he proclaimed war in the barbarous fashion of old, the heralds holding in one hand a bare sword and in the other a lighted torch, as signal of a war of fire and blood (*à feu et à sang*). The hostages of Liége had been for a year in the hands of the Duke, and it was a question what would be their fate. At length

Charles was induced to let them return home, with the warning that if they were taken in arms, they would receive no quarter.

Charles of Burgundy set forth from Louvain with a great army, and on October 27, 1467, he laid siege to the town of St. Tron, and the men of Liége marched in force—about 20,000 foot soldiers armed with pikes and culverins (a kind of musket) to defend it. The next day a battle was fought at Brusten, a village near, and for a time the result was doubtful, but the skill of Charles in the management of his archers turned the tide of victory; the half-trained soldiers of Liége were driven back with great loss, and would have been utterly destroyed but for the approach of night, and the marshy country intersected by ditches which favoured their flight. They lost everything, cannons, tents, and wagons, while St. Tron surrendered a few days later, and met with the usual fate: a heavy fine was imposed, the inhabitants had to ransom themselves and their goods, and the fortifications were razed to the ground.

Liége had time to prepare for a siege, but the party for peace prevailed, and the chapter and clergy were suffered to treat for terms. They were hard indeed, and the great city lost its supremacy for ever. Three hundred of the chief burghers, bare-headed and bare-footed, carried in doleful procession the keys of Liége to the Duke's feet. The city gave up all its privileges, its corporation, its guilds, and even its laws and customs. It was deprived of its artillery and war material; it was to be no longer under the sovereign jurisdiction of the Prince-Bishop, but was to take the oath of allegiance to the Duke. The fortifications

were to be destroyed, and in addition to the enormous fine previously demanded, 115,000 golden "lions" were to be paid as an indemnity.

On St. Martin's Feast, a dull November day, Charles rode in triumph with unsheathed sword into the city, whose very gates were removed for his entrance and the walls broken down. The great bell was rung which had so often summoned the burghers to meet in their free defiance, but now they waited in trembling silence to hear their doom from a stern conqueror. It was on their beloved city itself, on all that made up its history, its very existence, that sentence of death was passed. Those liberties and charters, bought in desperate strife with the life-blood of their ancestors, were forfeited and annulled. On that pitiful day for the men of Liége, by their own deed—the pride of life, the glory of patriotism were trampled in the dust—a splendid past was eclipsed in the present shame, and for their children, there would be no future.

CHAPTER VIII

1466–8

ARAGON OFFERED TO RENÉ OF ANJOU — DUKE OF CALABRIA IN SPAIN—ARMED GUILDS OF PARIS—THE STATES-GENERAL MEET AT TOURS—CHARLES OF BURGUNDY MARRIES MARGARET OF YORK — GALEAZZO MARIA SFORZA, NEW DUKE OF MILAN, MARRIES BONA OF SAVOY.

IN the month of August, 1466, at the very time when Charles of Burgundy was carrying out his vengeance against Dinant with fire and sword, an embassy was sent from Catalonia to offer René of Anjou the crown of Aragon. After his unfortunate experience with regard to Naples, we wonder that he could be tempted again by the bait of a kingdom, yet even at his ripe age of fifty-seven, "good King René" was full of the romantic valour of youth, and ever ready to leave his poetry, his painting, and his gay Court at Tarascon for any wild adventure. Yet the idea had serious justification, for through his mother Yolande he was direct heir of Juan I of Aragon, whose brother, Martin the Humane, had taken the succession in disregard of the rights of his nieces. The Lord of Anjou, Bar, and Provence, with a son so distinguished a warrior as Jean of Calabria, might seem to be well equipped for any contest.

On October 20, the Catalan ambassadors returned

to Barcelona bearing a favourable answer which was received with joyful acclamation. King René had been earnestly requested "in the name of God, the Holy Virgin, and St. George" to lose no time in sending his son at once with sufficient forces. The King of France was evidently in favour of the enterprise, as in a letter to the Duke of Milan on October 21 he writes: "As we have declared on behalf of our very dear and much beloved cousin the Duke of Calabria, with regard to the matter of Barcelona . . . and as we have heard that the men of Genoa have armed certain ships to do injury to the said Barcelona and to the prejudice of our said cousin of Calabria, we pray that you will cause the said army to retreat, and cause the said ships to be disarmed, and that you will suffer no harm or damage to be done by the said Genoese or any other subjects of yours to our cousin of Calabria, or to his people or those who take his part. . . ."

Letters from the "States of Paris" mention that "the King of Sicily has decided to go in person to Barcelona and is making ready to depart and take possession of the new domains which have come to him by hereditary right." It may be interesting at this point to quote the words in which Louis XI expressed his admiration for his uncle René.

"Depuis quelques années, le royaume de France etait debordé et envahi par les guerres intestines et les séditions. Un seul prince s'est trouvé qui par aucun moyen, sous aucun pretexte, n'a pu étre detourné de la fidélité qu'il nous devait et du soin de la dépense de l'Etat; c'est notre oncle bien aimé, le roi de Jerusalem, de Sicile et d'Aragon, qui avec une constance invaincue,

une volonté toujours droite, a maintenu l'antique honneur de ce royaume, en a respecté et augmenté le prestige, l'a arreté enfin, sur le bord du précipice." (For some years past, the kingdom of France was overflowing and invaded with intestine wars and seditions. One prince alone was found who by no means, under no pretext, could be turned away from the fidelity which he owed us and from the care and defence of the State; it is our well-beloved uncle, the King of Jerusalem, of Sicily, and of Aragon, who, with invincible courage and straightforward will, has maintained the ancient honour of this realm, has respected and increased its prestige, has, in short, arrested its course on the brink of a precipice.)

The Duke of Calabria was a prince so popular for his knightly courtesy and daring courage—a very hero of chivalry—that crowds of adventurers thronged to his standard, and at the head of about eight thousand men, he crossed the mountain passes of Roussillon the next spring and descended on the northern frontier of Catalonia. Juan II was but ill prepared to oppose him; his funds had been exhausted in the late campaign, Gaston de Foix was taking possession of Navarre, while Rome and Italy, threatened by the Turks, only thought of defending themselves. To complete the King's misfortunes, he was losing his sight; but his wife Juana boldly put herself at the head of such troops as she could collect and besieged Rosas in person, after taking several smaller places. Her son Ferdinand, who afterwards married Isabel of Castile, distinguished himself at the early age of fifteen by his gallant conduct before Gerona, where he nearly fell into the hands of the Duke of Calabria, who

was besieging the city, but was driven back with much loss. However, in the course of this campaign and the next, Jean succeeded in conquering the fertile country north-east of Barcelona, while in the capital itself he was welcomed with extraordinary enthusiasm. In the autumn of 1467, he had a narrow escape of being surprised by Juan of Aragon, as one of the city gates had been left open for the enemy's entrance, and the treachery was barely discovered in time. The death of Queen Juana the next year was a great blow to her party, for her diplomatic skill was as great as her courage and energy. Yet, in the beginning, it was her unjust persecution of her stepson Don Carlos, to further the interests of her own child Ferdinand, which had been the cause of all the troubles which came upon her house. At the time when Philip, Duke of Burgundy, was dying at Bruges, in the summer of 1467, Louis XI was using all his influence to obtain a permanent peace with England. The Earl of Warwick had persuaded Edward IV to send him over as ambassador to Rouen; where he was received with much ceremony and honour. The King of France had a very high opinion of his political genius, and hoped that he might be able to baffle the intrigues with Burgundy. Warwick renewed the truce with France, but it was without the consent of Edward IV, who could scarcely be induced to receive the French ambassadors when they returned with the English Earl, for the suggested marriage of Margaret of York with Charles of Burgundy was strongly desired by her brother.

Louis spent much of the summer at Chartres, and we have various letters written by him with regard to

the ship which is to take over the Earl of Warwick from Harfleur to Sandwich, and also with regard to the embassy which he is sending to England, to try by all means to prevent the close alliance by marriage of England and Burgundy. The King also takes special interest in various trade unions; he writes to suggest mayors for various provincial towns, and with regard to the appointment of certain canons. A terrible plague has raged in Paris, and there have been so many deaths that Louis authorizes by letters patent all persons from other countries to come and take up their abode in the capital, excepting such as have been guilty of treason. He also encourages the inhabitants to enrol themselves under the banners of their guilds, in his defence and that of their city. In the long series of edicts of this year, we notice the confirmations of privileges for various cities, and for corporations of students and the university, encouragement of the silk industry of Lyons and of the fairs of that city, in rivalry of those of Geneva.

The edict with regard to the abolition of the Pragmatic Sanction had not yet been registered, and "Maitre Jean Balue" worked steadily towards that end, and received his cardinal's hat, although he was obliged to yield to the opposition of the Parliament and the University.

Early in August, the King returned to Paris and the Queen joined him there, having arrived by barge at Nôtre Dame, where she was received by the Parliament, the Bishop, and the Chapter. During this visit to Paris, great feasts and entertainments were held, and it is especially noted that the ladies wore head-dresses trailing almost to the ground and broad sashes, having

given up the long trains worn previously. Amongst these great ladies was Bona of Savoy, the Queen's sister, who was soon to marry the Duke of Milan. The King had set his heart upon this marriage, and we find it often alluded to in his many letters to Galeazzo Maria Sforza.

On the 17th of September there was held a great review of the new armed guilds of Paris, from the age of sixteen to sixty, to the number of 100,000. Louis on this occasion gave them standards adorned with a white cross. There were present sixty-seven banners of the trades, besides all those connected with the offices of state. It was a most imposing spectacle, greatly enjoyed by the King and his Court.

This citizen army might be needed at any time, for already a new conspiracy was forming, this time more general than the last, for the House of Savoy and the English were to take part in it. The ringleader appears to have been the Duke of Alençon, so often pardoned. He joined the Bretons, and they took Bayeux and Lower Normandy where the castle of Caen was surprised, but they were checked at St. Lô by the heroic courage of a woman who led the defence. The men of Normandy always rose in their might against the yoke of strangers, whether they were Bretons or English, and they usually succeeded. The King himself set out for Mont-Saint-Michel, passing through Mantes to Vernon, where he met the ambassadors of Burgundy, and by means of the Count of St. Pol a truce was concluded on the 1st of November between the King and Charles of Burgundy for six months. This was a great blow to Charles of France and his adherents, who counted upon the Duke's immediate help.

At Chartres the King received a deputation from the Duchess Dowager and the new Duke of Milan, and confirmed the rights he had yielded, on Genoa and Savona. He also gave Galeazzo permission to add the arms of France to those of Milan. Louis went in person to the siege of Alençon, and he soon regained the whole duchy, for the Count Du Perche, the son of Alençon, and the inhabitants came over to his side. The Duke of Alençon was forgiven again, but it was not safe to trust too much to the King's clemency, for he could be inexorably severe, as he showed himself to several traitors on this occasion. Louis also continued to treat with the Duke of Brittany, who all the time was engaged in secret intrigues with Edward IV, and had even signed a treaty promising to place him in possession of thirty towns and fortresses, in return for the help of three thousand English archers. But Edward was very fully occupied with affairs at home, he had little confidence in his Breton allies, and looked upon Charles of France as a young fool. Louis saw clearly that there was nothing to fear from England, but he neglected no precautions, for he had enemies on every side. All the princes of the House of Savoy were against him at this time, even his sister Yolande.

The most serious question which he had to decide was that of the appanage which should be given to his brother. To decide this and other matters he decided to appeal to the nation, and the representatives of the three estates were summoned to meet at Tours by the end of March, 1468. It was a bold move but certainly a wise one. The assembly was opened by the King with great ceremony, most of the nobles and bishops summoned were present or sent representatives, while

each of the sixty-four towns sent three laymen and one representative in orders. We have a copy of the circular letter which the King sent round to the various cities, and of which the record remains at Poitiers, Lyons, Rodez, and Tournay. He addresses it to "noz chiers et bien amez les gens d'église, bourgeois, manans et habitans de la ville de. . . ." "You know the troubles and divisions which prevail . . . in our kingdom to the great . . . and oppression of our poor people and our good and loyal subjects, and to our great trouble . . . by great deliberation and counsel . . . we have concluded . . . to assemble the princes of the blood and the peers of France and the three estates of the realm to have their good advice and counsel. . . . Therefore we wish and expressly desire that of the most notable men of the city . . . you send to us to the number of four persons, one of the church and *three* [many historians have made this *two*] of the laity . . . to hear what shall be said to them and shown on our part, concerning various matters, and to attend, to labour, to hear, and conclude thereupon . . . we have deliberated and concluded to the royal authority, the honour and rights of the crown as we have sworn and promised, and to provide for the good and use of our kingdom by good advice and counsel, in such manner that, by the help of God, our good and loyal subjects may live and remain under us in good justice, peace, and tranquillity. . . ." The Chancellor, Guillaume Juvenal des Ursins, had first held the office twenty-three years before, in the reign of Charles VII, and was a man of much wisdom and experience. He made a learned speech, too long to quote, full of texts from the Bible, and the sayings of poets and philosophers. Then he stated the three

points on which the King required their counsel and decision.

1st. Do the dukes of Burgundy and Brittany owe obedience to the King like other vassals, and can they call in the help of foreigners?

2nd. Can Normandy be alienated from the Crown of France?

3rd. Has the King sufficiently provided for the appanage of his brother?

These were the chief questions discussed in that great assembly where the King presided in state, wearing a royal robe of white damask embroidered with gold, on a raised seat, with his lords around him, amongst whom were the lords of Nevers and Eu, the Count of Foix, René of Anjou, and Cardinal Balue, while at the King's feet sat the little Prince of Piedmont. The great officers of the Crown were on one side, the bishops on the other; then came the barons, the counts, and other nobles; and last, not least, the great body of deputies from the cities of France.

It was unanimously declared that nothing could excuse a vassal who rebelled against his sovereign, and that the treaty of the Duke of Brittany with the English was a grievous offence against the realm of France. Whenever any vassals should thus fail in their duty, the King was authorized to take arms against them without waiting to summon the States-General. With regard to Normandy, it was clearly stated that "for no cause under heaven, neither from brotherly affection, nor any form of promise, nor pretence of gift, nor fear of war or any other danger, should the King ever agree to the separation of that duchy from the Crown."

As for the appanage of Charles of France, the whole question was gone into thoroughly, and the rule of Charles V was considered to decide the question; 12,000 livres de rente for each younger son, but if it pleased the King to give his brother 60,000 livres, it should be without prejudice for the future.

Touching the Duke of Burgundy, the Estates mildly ventured to recommend that he should be asked to assist in the establishment of order, and they chose a committee from their own body to confer with him. After all these conclusions, to which was added much praise of the King's policy, the great assembly dispersed. One historian, who is usually most unfavourable to Louis, remarks: "The common people always saw in him the friend of peace, and the adversary of that nobility by which they had been so long oppressed." Later in the year a great reform was carried out, by which the King declared that in future "no office shall be forfeited by any officer of justice, unless judgment is passed against him by a competent court."

The delegates sent to announce the decisions of the States to Charles of Burgundy were very uncourteously received; he took no trouble to control his anger, and "gave them no good words." He had recently held a magnificent Chapter of the Golden Fleece at Bruges, and felt deeply aggrieved at any reminder that he was accountable to a suzerain lord. However, it suited his purpose to prolong the truce with France until August 1, as he was about to celebrate his marriage, so long projected, with Margaret of York, sister of Edward IV. We have a very full and picturesque account of this wedding, and all the gorgeous medieval pageants with which it was celebrated. The Lady

Margaret, after going to St. Paul's, rode through London behind the Earl of Warwick—on the same horse—and received rich presents. On Friday, July 1, she "shipped at Margate," whither she was accompanied by the Lord Scales, a gallant company of knights, and more than eighty ladies of rank. The Lord Admiral of England himself took charge of the sixteen vessels needed by the Princess and her suite, which reached in safety the Flemish port of Sluys, where she met with a splendid reception. After resting a week, the royal company travelled in barges on the canal to Damme, a small town near Bruges, and here the marriage ceremony was performed by the Bishop of Salisbury, assisted by the Pope's Legate. The next day she made a stately entry into Bruges, where the great procession met her at the gate of Sainte-Croix, of the nobles glittering in gold and gems, all the civic authorities in their quaint costumes, the prelates and clergy in their robes, the foreign trading companies, archers, heralds, and countless other gorgeous figures, to the deafening welcome of clarions and trumpets. As the Lady Margaret, in her robe of cloth of silver and crown of diamonds, rode through the streets hung with splendid tapestry and cloth of gold, white doves were let loose from the triumphal arches as she passed beneath. As for the entertainments provided, the dramatic representations in the streets, the tournaments, the banquets, and other delights, many pages would be required to do them justice in all their glory. It is curious to read the account given by John Paston the younger, who had the good fortune to be in Bruges at this auspicious moment.

We are told that at the first banquet, on the other

THE OLD WHITE KING (FREDERICK III) GIVING COUNSEL TO HIS SON
By L. Beck
Woodcut from *Der Weiss-Künig*

THE KING OF THE STEEL (CHARLES OF BURGUNDY) AND HIS ONLY DAUGHTER
By Burgkmair
Woodcut from *Der Weiss-Künig*

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side of the Duke Charles, in his "short gowne of goldsmith's work and diamantis, perles and so great balas (rubies), sat the Damoysell of Bourgogne," his daughter Marie, a girl of eleven, the heir of his great dominions, to whom her new stepmother was always a loyal and faithful friend.

Another marriage had taken place this year in which Louis XI was very greatly interested, that of Galeazzo Maria Sforza, Duke of Milan, with Bona of Savoy, the younger sister of Queen Charlotte, who had been brought up at the Court of France. The wedding took place at Amboise on the 10th of May, 1468, in the presence of the King and Queen, Cardinal Balue being the officiating priest. The Duchess Dowager of Milan, Bianca Visconti, ratified the marriage contract. She died the following October, "more from sorrow of heart than sickness of body," and the Italian chroniclers accuse Galeazzo of ingratitude towards his mother. In fact, many of them paint him in the blackest colours, and say "that he gave himself up to unbridled profligacy and cruelty." But we also hear of him as a liberal patron of art and learning. He greatly encouraged the University of Pavia, and founded a library at Milan; he introduced printing into his duchy, and Milan is credited with the honour of the first book produced in Italy, the *Grammar of Lascaris,* a Greek professor who took refuge here after the fall of Constantinople.

Lodovico Sforza, the younger brother of Galeazzo, was sent by him to receive the bride at Genoa. Amongst the many letters written by Louis XI to the Duke of Milan, there is one written on the 26th of July, expressing his great satisfaction at the good impression

made by Bona of Savoy, "nostra sorella e figliola, Madama Bona." The poor lady was destined to meet with much trouble in after years, but from all we learn about her she was very extravagant, vain, and foolish. "Qui estoit de petit sens," says Commines.

At the present time the Duke of Milan was a valuable ally to Louis, whom we find writing to thank him for the ships and troops which he has sent into Catalonia, July, 1468, and there are also several letters asking the Duke to have everything in readiness to commence hostilities against Savoy, as soon as the King's troops make war on Burgundy.

On the expiration of the truce, the King caused his army to march against the Norman towns which were still in the possession of the Bretons; Bayeux, Coutances, and several other towns were soon retaken, but Caen stood out with the help of a reinforcement from Burgundy. On the other side the Marquess du Pont, at the head of the troops from Anjou and Poitou, made a vigorous invasion of Brittany, took Chantocé, and passed on to the siege of Ancenis. The Duke François, seeing himself in peril, called to his help the Duke of Burgundy, but his old ally was still bound by his truce. After many days of discussion, the Duke of Brittany, seeing no hope of support, signed a treaty of peace at Ancenis. The appanage of Charles of France still remained to be settled, and it was suggested that Jean of Calabria and the Constable of St. Pol should be the umpires; but "Monsieur" refused, and remained in Brittany. Thus nothing could be settled, and new complications arose at the last moment.

A deplorable incident took place at this time, in

which Louis gave an instance of that stern and pitiless severity which contrasts so strongly with his frequent acts of clemency. Charles de Melun, Seigneur de Nantouillet, his former friend and favourite, was tried by order of the King for high treason; he was found guilty and beheaded in August, 1468. Commines says that he did not deserve this fate, "which befell him more by the pursuit of his enemies than by the fault of the King." Other rebels and traitors were freely forgiven, but Charles de Melun had two powerful enemies —Cardinal Balue, whom he had greatly favoured, and Dammartin, who had good cause to remember his fatal suppression of evidence at *his* trial.

It was by such deeds as the execution of Charles de Melun, that Louis made himself hated and feared by the nobles, for who, in those days of constant treachery, could think himself safe from discovery and a like retribution?

The Princes of the House of Savoy were amongst those of his kindred who turned against Louis in the hour of his necessity. Philip de Bresse had been set free after his two years' imprisonment, and had received many tokens of favour, but his restless spirit drew him into intrigues with Burgundy, and at length on June 24, at Pont-de-Faux, he openly ratified his treaty with Duke Charles, who bestowed upon him the collar of the Golden Fleece and a large pension, when he fled into Burgundy, taking with him his two brothers, Louis of Savoy, Bishop of Geneva, and Jacques Count of Romont.

But the reigning Duke of Savoy, Amedée le Bienheureux, the husband of Yolande of France, came on a visit to Paris to protest against the conduct of his

two brothers and to thank the King for his support in the matter of Montferrand. Amedée was a pious, saintly character, quite out of place as a ruling prince in those turbulent days, for his real vocation was the monastic life, where he could have spent all his time unmolested in prayer and meditation. He was received with great honour by Louis XI, who "set free many prisoners," as the most pleasing offering to his gentle guest.

CHAPTER IX

1468–70

LOUIS XI GOES TO PÉRONNE—HIS GREAT PERIL—TREATY WITH CHARLES OF BURGUNDY—LOUIS COMPELLED TO JOIN IN THE SIEGE AND DESTRUCTION OF LIÉGE—TREACHERY AND PUNISHMENT OF CARDINAL BALUE—LOUIS XI GIVES GUIENNE TO HIS BROTHER CHARLES—LOUIS MAKES PEACE BETWEEN MARGUERITE OF ANJOU AND THE EARL OF WARWICK.

THE truce between France and Burgundy came to an end on July 15, 1468, and in preparation for this date, Charles of Burgundy had collected a great army on the frontier, with a strong supply of horses, wagons, tents, and artillery. His camp, surrounded in the usual manner by a barrier of wagons, with an outer defence of palisades and entrenchments, lined not only with tents, but rough houses built of clay, was almost like a fortified city. On receiving an earnest appeal from the Duke of Brittany—"Je vous prie sur tout l'amour et l'alliance d'entre vous et moy, qu'à ce besoing me venez secourir ; . . . car il en est temps et le plus déligement que pourrez venez, et sans plus delay"—Charles crossed the Somme with a part of his army. He was apparently about to open the campaign, when a Breton herald brought him news of the Treaty of Ancenis, and in his fury at the defection of his ally, the Duke at first declared that the dispatches

were forged, and threatened to hang the luckless messenger.

Louis took advantage of this moment to try and widen the breach between the former allies, and he sent various embassies to Charles with the most favourable terms, and even an offer of a large sum to pay the expenses of the Duke's war preparations. Cardinal Balue and the Constable St. Pol were sent to the enemy's camp, and from September 21st to the 29th there was much discussion, but no result. So many different accounts are given of the events which followed, that it is extremely difficult to find out what really happened.

Was it the treacherous counsel of Cardinal Balue which first suggested to the King that a personal interview with Charles would be the simplest way of settling the matter and avoiding the war which Louis dreaded for his country more than anything else? We shall never know, but at least Balue did all in his power to encourage the perilous move which was vehemently opposed by Dammartin, the other generals, and all the King's true friends. Louis himself had a very high idea of his own power of persuasion, and he hoped to persuade the Duke at this crisis to break entirely with Brittany and Charles of France, and to become the faithful friend and ally of France. So splendid a result would be worth any effort, and Louis hastened to propose the meeting to the Duke of Burgundy, and to ask for a safe-conduct. This was sent by Charles, in the most clear and explicit terms.

"Sire, if it be your pleasure to come to this town of Péronne that we may confer together, I swear and promise you, by my faith and on my honour, that you may come, remain and sojourn and return in surety

. . . freely and openly, without let or hindrance to you or any of your people, by me or any other, for any cause that now exists *or that hereafter may arise. . . .*" This letter, in the handwriting of Charles, dated October 8, is still preserved in the Public Library of Paris.

Louis, remembering that he had recently sent two delegates to Liége "to provoke a diversion," now sent off an urgent message to these envoys and also to the men of Liége, explaining fully his project of reconciliation, and strongly impressing upon them the necessity of peace, so the historian Garnier relates. The Duke also appears to have sent a message to the Bishop of Liége and the Sire d'Humbercourt, requesting them at once to retire to Tongres: "comme une manière de provocation." The King set forth from Noyon with the Duke of Bourbon, the Bishop of Lyons, the Sire de Beaujeu, the Count of Dunois, Cardinal Balue, and St. Pol, whose conduct at this time had been more than doubtful, as he strongly advocated this dangerous journey. The rest of the suite consisted of eighty Scots Guards and sixty horsemen. The King was met on the frontier by a Burgundian escort of two hundred lances, and Charles, with a company of nobles, awaited him on the banks of a little river near Péronne.

Nothing could be more friendly than the meeting between these two old enemies; they embraced each other and then rode side by side into the town, in earnest conversation like the dearest of friends, to the lodging prepared for the King near the castle, which was said to be out of repair. The picturesque story is told that as he looked out of window, "le Roy présent aux fenestres de sondit logis," he saw arriving

in the courtyard below a group of his most deadly enemies, all rebels and traitors now serving with the army of Burgundy, "and who seemed come to brave him." For the first time Louis realized what he had done, and a sudden panic came over him, but he gave no other sign of it than to send a message to the Duke, asking if he might take up his quarters in the castle itself. This request was at once granted, and the same afternoon, he passed under the massive gateway with his few followers between a file of the Burgundian guard, and found that the room assigned to him was near a certain tower, in which a Count de Vermandois had caused one of his ancestors, Charles the Simple, to be put to death. This was a gruesome memory, but worse was to come. The conferences began the next day, and the King of France was willing to make almost any concession if Charles would give up his alliance with England and Brittany, but this was the very point on which the Duke was obstinate, and no progress was made.

For the events which followed, we will tell the story given by Commines, who was an eye-witness of much which he relates. On the evening of October 10 news arrived at Péronne that there had been a terrible outbreak of savage rebellion of the men of Liége, that Tongres had been taken and sacked, the garrison slain, the Bishop and Humbercourt murdered, and that this was all done under the command of the agents sent by Louis. This report was very greatly exaggerated and in a measure false, but the men of Liége had fetched their Bishop back from Tongres "without violence," had killed one canon whom they specially hated, and sixteen other people. Charles of Burgundy pro-

fessed to believe the very worst, and gave way to such violent rage that those about him feared for the King's life. The gates of the castle and the town were closed, the guards doubled, and no one permitted to enter or depart. Commines, who slept in the Duke's chamber, says that he "did not pull off his clothes even on the third night after this happened, but only threw himself twice or thrice upon the bed, and then got up again and walked about. . . . I walked several turns with him. . . . The next morning he was in a greater passion than ever. . . ." During this time Commines had done his best to soothe and calm his angry lord, but from all we learn, Louis never had a narrower escape than during that imprisonment in the grim castle of Péronne.

No later study of history can ever make us forget the vivid fancy picture of this incident with which the "Wizard of the North" charmed our youth, in the pages of *Quentin Durward*, and the impression left upon us is probably accurate in one point; the extreme peril of the King so fully realized by him. His worst enemies, (amongst whom I am afraid we must count Sir Walter Scott), have always given him credit for great courage and presence of mind in adversity, and these qualities are clearly seen in the eleven letters preserved to us, which Louis wrote during the eventful three weeks when he was at the mercy of his most deadly foe.

There is not the slightest trace of hurry or excitement in those which he wrote to the Duke of Milan on October 13; in one he calmly expresses his wish to keep the Milanese Secretary, "maistre Albert," to whom he dictates a long epistle written down in Italian,

and ending with fourteen lines in cipher, of which the key, alas! has never been found! The Duke of Milan is warmly thanked for his readiness to second the King in his operations against Savoy; but he is specially requested to suspend all hostilities on account of the negotiations then being carried on with the Duke of Burgundy, which it is hoped will have a favourable issue.

On the 14th, Louis writes to the Grand Master, Dammartin; he tells the story of his coming to Péronne, of the conferences with his "brother" the Duke, and how "graces â Nostre Seigneur, avons juré paix finable sollempnellement sur la vraye croix, et promis ayder, deffendre et secourir l'un l'autre à jamais. . . ." Whereupon his brother of Burgundy gives thanks in all the churches. And as his aforesaid brother of Burgundy has had news that the men of Liége have taken his cousin the Bishop of Liége, whom he is determined to recover by any means ". . . il m'a supplicé et requis que, en faveur luy, aussi que ledit evesque est mon prochain parent, lequel je suis en bon droit tenu de secourir, que mon plaisir fust aller jusques ès marches du Liége, qui sont prochaines d'icy, ce que je luy ay ottroyé . . . en ésperance de brief retourner, moyennant l'aide de Dieu. . . ." Then he adds instructions to Dammartin, as general of his great army on the frontier, to disband "l'arrière-ban et les frans archiers," who are to be carefully conducted home by their captains that they may do no damage.

This astounding order may have been sent by the wish of the Duke of Burgundy, whose slightest word was now law; or it may have been prompted by the anxiety of the King lest his faithful captain should

attempt a rescue. In any case, Dammartin had not the slightest intention of obeying; it is even said that he defiantly sent word to Charles that unless the King returned, all France would come to fetch him.

In his character of war correspondent, Louis wrote the same mild account of his visit to Péronne and of his willingness to aid in the rescue of his "cousin," the Bishop of Liége, to various cities—Senlis, Compiègne, Poitiers, and others, bidding the authorities see to their defences. The Treaty of Péronne, signed by both the Princes, insisted on the full execution of that made at Conflans; the relief of the courts of Flanders from the jurisdiction of the Parliament of Paris, the surrender of the King's suzerain rights over Picardy, the sanction of the Duke's alliance with England, and the release of Burgundy from all fealty to the King if the treaty were not fully executed.

It must be remembered that by this time Charles knew what had really been done by the men of Liége, but he still remained fiercely indignant. Michelet asks if this was mere acting. It suited the Duke's purpose to think that he had been betrayed, and to keep up his blind fury so as to forget the explicit safe-conduct which he had given. He insisted that Louis should accompany him in person to put down the rebellion of Liége, and the King had no choice but to consent willingly, as the friendly Commines had specially warned him to agree to *everything*. With all his opportunities as an eye-witness, it must be owned that Commines is a most tantalizing chronicler. At the critical moment of the story, when we hold our breath in suspense, he calmly goes off into two long tedious dissertations on general principles. "Digression sur

l'avantage que les bonnes lettres, et principalement les histoires font aux princes et grands seigneurs." And again: "Digression sur ce que, quand deux grands princes s'entrevoyent pour cuider appaiser différends, telle venue est plus dommageable que profitable."

On October 15, the King and the Duke set out together from Péronne in very bad weather, for the winter was already beginning. They slept at Cambray on the 17th, and reached Namur on the morning of the 21st, remaining there three days, during which Louis wrote again to Dammartin, repeating his assurance that he was under no restraint, that he was well treated, and that his messenger would tell of "la bonne chère que nous faisons." Louis thanks his faithful general for having made no hostile demonstration, "car les gens de monseigneur de Bourgoigne eussent cuidé que je les eusse voulu tromper, et ceulx de par delà eussent cuidé que j'eusses esté prisonnier; ainsi par deffiance les ungs des autres, j'estois perdu. . . ." Louis then gives directions about the removal of the army from the frontier, and bids his general meet him at Laon, for as soon as Liége is subdued he will leave, for the Duke "désire plus mon retour de par delà que je ne faitz. . . ." Did Charles really desire his departure?

The King has leisure of mind to write other letters from Namur—with regard to preparation for repelling a proposed descent of the English in Guienne, and also about an affair which concerns the Duke of Calabria. Even when he is before Liége he continues his correspondence with undiminished serenity; but he remarks to the Count of Foix that when he sets forth homewards on the following Tuesday (it proved to be a day later, Wednesday, November 2), he "will

not cease to ride without any delay until he arrives, 'delà!'"

The Pope, Paul II, who had so long opposed Liége, appears to have been induced by the King of France to revoke all interdicts against the city and to send his Legate to make peace between the Bishop, whose character was well known, and his flock. But this did not suit the policy of Charles, to whose influence the worthless Louis of Bourbon yielded, and instead of returning to Liége, where the people were prepared to receive him with all submission, he joined the Burgundian Governor, Humbercourt, at Tongres, and it was this treachery which roused the fury of the men of Liége. When the Duke of Burgundy arrived to attack them with an army "which might have conquered an emperor," the wretched citizens—whose walls had been razed to the ground, and whose artillery and munitions of war had been confiscated—were absolutely at the mercy of their powerful enemy. At the suggestion of the Legate, they sent their Bishop to intercede for them, offering to give up all their worldly possessions, if only their lives might be spared. But Charles, in his rage, refused to listen to any intercession, and swore that nothing should stay his vengeance. The besieged fought with the courage of despair; in their first sally they were driven back with great loss, but a few days later, they made another attack at nightfall on the camp and slew a number of the soldiers of Burgundy. On the night of the 29th, a resolute company of miners and colliers from the hilly district round, made a desperate attack upon the suburb in which the King and Duke were quartered, not far apart, and we are told that the owner of the Duke's house was killed by the

Scottish guard, which always protected the person of the King. Charles has been suspected of connivance, but probably without reason. In any case, the alarm was given and the assailants were overwhelmed, fighting to the last.

Commines greatly admires the courage and presence of mind of the King on this occasion. Having once given his word, Louis fought steadily on the Burgundian side, wearing the St. Andrew's Cross, and crying, "Vive Bourgogne!" He used all his influence in imploring the Duke to save the doomed city from the horrors of a sack, but Charles only replied with an insult, and gave orders for the final assault on Sunday, October 30, when the citizens, vaguely hoping that the day would be respected, were off their guard, and made but little resistance. The horrors of that awful time surpassed even those at the destruction of Dinant. All the hapless people who could not pay a ransom to satisfy their captors, were drowned in the river. The brutal soldiery cut down women, children, and old men, not sparing those who had taken refuge in the churches, from which the chalices and holy vessels were seized, even being snatched from the hands of the priests. The wretched fugitives who escaped to the mountains were pursued by Charles himself with malignant energy, and the places where they had taken refuge were set on fire.

He had taken leave of the King of France three days after the assault, when they went through the Articles of the Peace together, and at the last moment, Louis asked what was he to do if his brother should not be satisfied with his appanage. To this the Duke replied: "S'il ne le veut prendre, mais que vous fassiez qu'il

soit content, je m'en rapporte à vous deux." "Great things followed from this question and answer, as you will hear," says Commines.

The whole story of Péronne could not fail to excite the satirical wit of the Parisians, and the King, after his three weeks of keen anxiety, felt this acutely, and was unwise enough to show it. He ordered that all who spoke ill of the Duke of Burgundy should be severely punished, while the names were to be taken of all owners of magpies, jackdaws, and other talking birds, who had been maliciously taught to cry "Péronne!"

The King took up his abode again at Tours and Amboise, and we see in his many letters of this period, the minute care which he took about all the affairs of his kingdom. We find him making arrangements about the silk looms of Lyons, granting a great number of remissions and amnesties, making rules for the "corps de métiers" of Tours, Soissons, and other towns, establishing fairs and markets wherever they were asked for, giving leave for the fortification of certain castles, insisting upon the restitution of money and goods stolen from a certain spice-merchant, and the record of favours accorded to the churches and abbeys of Gap, of Luçon, of Noyon, and others.

There was a much more painful task before the King of France. Cardinal Balue had been high in his favour before the incident of Péronne, but he could not fail to remember by whose advice he had walked into that trap. His suspicions were now aroused, and were fully justified when, soon after, a messenger carrying a letter in cipher, written by the Cardinal, was arrested near Châteaudun. When taken to Amboise and questioned,

this Simon Belée confessed everything. Never was treachery more complete and unpardonable. Balue betrayed all the King's intentions to the Duke of Burgundy, told him that Charles of France would probably be persuaded to accept Guienne instead of Champagne and la Brie, and advised him to prevent the reconciliation of the two brothers by at once sending to fetch Charles by sea from the Breton coast to the Netherlands. The letter also pressed the Duke to fortify in haste Amiens, Abbeville, and St. Quentin, and by all possible means to win over the Duke of Brittany and the Constable St. Pol.

On making this discovery Louis immediately sent for the Cardinal and his friend and accomplice, Guillaume d'Harancourt, Bishop of Verdun, who confessed all, but Balue stood out, and sought in vain to excuse himself in a private interview with the King at Amboise. The trial took place in the most solemn and impartial manner, and both the Prelates were found guilty of high treason. Every judicial form had been observed; a deputation had been sent to the Pope, who was surrounded by friends of Burgundy, and there were long and learned disquisitions on the subject of the Bishops being tried only in an ecclesiastical court. At length the King lost patience; the crime was fully proved, and the very rank of the offenders made an example necessary, but he shrank from inflicting the usual penalty of death. The Cardinal had once recommended to his master an invention of some Italian tyrant: a cage of iron eight feet square; and possibly with a grim sense of humour, Louis XI in his most pitiless mood, ordered two of these horrible prisons to be prepared for the guilty Prelates. Commines says

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MARGUERITE D'ANJOU,

REINE D'ANGLETERRE;

née le 23 Mars 1429; morte le 25 Aoust 1482.

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that the Bishop of Verdun invented the cage. This gave great amusement to the people of Paris, who hated Balue, and the following heartless rondel, amongst others, was sung in the streets :—

> Maitre Jean Balue
> A perdu la vue
> De ses évêchés ;
> Monsieur de Verdun
> N'en a pas plus un,
> Tous sont dépêchés.

It is only fair to remark that these cages were fixed in large upper rooms, and were probably much drier and more healthy than the slimy dungeons underground.

An historian always hostile to Louis XI mentions this cruel sentence without a word of reprobation, simply remarking that the Bishops "passed eleven years in tranquil retirement, undisturbed by the tumults, unharassed by the temptations of the world."

This secret fomenter of discord having been removed, the King renewed his earnest endeavours to make a lasting peace with his brother. He won over to his side Odet d'Aydie, Sire of Lescun, who had great influence with "Monsieur," and persuaded the foolish vacillating young Prince to accept the splendid appanage of Guienne, with Saintonge and the government of la Rochelle, while his income was raised to 80,000 livres. After Charles had taken formal possession of his fief and sworn fidelity, a meeting was arranged between the brothers to complete their reconciliation. This took place on September 7, 1469, on a bridge of boats over the Sèvre, on the frontier of Guienne, and we can tell the story from the King's

own letters. "Dieu mercy et Nostre Dame, aujourd-'huy, à six heures après midy, nostre beau frère le duc de Guienne s'est venu rendre devers nous au Port de Bérault, ainsi qu'il avoit esté appoincté. Et pour ce qu'il avoit aucunes barrières fortes entre nous deux, il nous a requis faire tout rompre incontinent et s'en est venu devers nous . . . et nous a fait la plus grande et ample obeissance qu'il estoit possible de faire, et nous devons encore demain trouver ensemble. . . ."

A wooden barrier had been made as usual, with a grating of iron bars to look through, and it was through this that the younger Prince insisted on passing. They embraced each other, and were most cordial and affectionate, while later letters of the King speak of their stay together and their mutual promises of future confidence. The Duke of Burgundy was furious when he heard of their good understanding, and the more so when his ambassadors were coldly received by the new Duke of Guienne, who refused his offer of the collar of the Golden Fleece. The King of France, he said, had recently instituted a new Order of St. Michael, of which he was the first member, and he was not able to accept any other.

Towards the end of December, Charles of France paid a visit to the King and Queen at Plessis-les-Tours, where he was received with great joy, and was sumptuously entertained. He had given back to the King the ring with which he was supposed to "espousé la duchie," and we have a curious message from Louis that the ring is to be publicly shown and broken at the next session of the Exchequer of Normandy. During this year, the Count of Armagnac had been in constant secret rebellion, although so often pardoned before.

He had invited the English to enter Gascony, and had promised to make them masters of that province and of Languedoc. His undisciplined troops committed so many excesses that at length he was summoned to appear before the Parliament, and on his repeated refusal was attacked, defeated, and condemned. He fled into Spain, and his estates were confiscated.

Meantime there was a crisis in the affairs of England, for during the summer of 1469 an insurrection broke out in the north, when Lord Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, was defeated and beheaded. The Earl of Warwick came over from Calais with Clarence and took King Edward IV prisoner to Coventry, where they seized Earl Rivers, the Queen's father, and her brother, Sir John Woodville, and put them to death. On hearing of these events, Marguerite of Anjou, who had now been nearly seven years in exile, took fresh courage ; she left her lonely castle at Verdun, and with her son, Prince Edward, came in December to visit Louis XI at Tours, where her father, King René, came to meet her and consult what use they should make of Edward's defeat. The King of France was most friendly, and every post brought news of risings and war in England. Then came a report that Edward IV was free, and that the Earl of Warwick had attempted to make good his flight by landing at Calais, but had been refused admittance to the city by his own lieutenant. His only refuge now was France, and Louis received him willingly, having resolved upon the bold plan of making an alliance, if possible, between Marguerite of Anjou and the man who had consigned her unfortunate husband, Henry VI, to these

long years of captivity. It was suggested that her son, the Prince of Wales, a handsome lad of seventeen, should marry Anne Neville, the second daughter of Warwick, whose eldest daughter was the wife of the Duke of Clarence—such were the extraordinary complications in this tangled diplomacy.

Before the proud Marguerite could make up her mind to such an alliance with her bitterest enemy of past times, a great event happened for the King and France. A son was born to Queen Charlotte at Amboise, on June 30, 1470, after so many years of hope deferred, and throughout the land there were great rejoicings, while the Te Deum was sung in all the churches. Never was Dauphin of France welcomed with more joy than the future Charles VIII, and the King, in thanksgiving, made rich presents to St. Peter's at Rome, and other churches, more especially to Nôtre-Dame du Puy, where a silver image of the child was presented. After the baptism, at which the god-parents were the Prince of Wales and Jeanne Duchess of Bourbon the King's sister, most of the royal party proceded to Angers for the wedding of the young Prince Edward with Anne Neville.

Marguerite had at last yielded to the persuasion of her father, René of Anjou who, with the Duke of Guienne and the Earl of Warwick, was amongst the guests at the quiet ceremony which took place on July 25, 1470. The King thus mentions it in a letter to Monseigneur du Plessis, in which he makes provision for the maintenance of the Earl of Warwick and his men until they set sail for England. "Aujourd'uy avons fait le mariage de la royne d'Angleterre et de lui, et demain espère l'avoir du tout depesché prest à s'en

partir." Louis paid all the expenses, and we find in the royal accounts of this year: "A maistre Jehan Le Marchant, prestre, la somme de XXVII l. x. s. t. pour vingt escus d'or, à luy donnée par le roy . . . en faveur de ce qu'il estoit espouser le prince de Galles à la fille du conte de Warwich."

The King was very anxious for the departure of Warwick, as a fleet of English and Burgundian vessels was hanging about the coast and keeping the whole neighbourhood in alarm. At length the Earl seized his opportunity of a thick fog, and set forth, protected by French ships, and was so lucky as not only to escape his enemies, but to take a convoy of fifteen merchant craft which were sold as prize of war at Dartmouth. We are told that Louis went to Mont-Saint-Michel in order to receive the earliest news of the enterprise. On his way back to Tours, he made a special visit to St. Lo, to reward a certain woman who had helped in the heroic defence of the town against the Bretons. When the news arrived of the success of his allies, and the release and restoration of Henry VI on October 25, he caused public proclamation to be made of his alliance with the King of England, and his order to receive all English merchants and others without safe-conduct, save Edward, *formerly called King of England*, and his accomplices.

In a few words, this is what had happened. Edward was at York when he received news of Warwick's landing, and he was unwise enough to send against him Lord Montague, the Earl's brother, who already had a private grudge against the King, and who at once joined his enemies. By a sudden turn of fate, Edward found himself deserted, and was warned that in flight

was his only safety. He rode by night to Lynn, found a ship in the harbour, and embarked at once with no other escort than two Dutch merchant ships. In his company were his brother Richard, Duke of Gloucester, Lord Rivers, Lord Hastings, and their attendants; they had no clothes but those they wore and no goods of any kind, so that they were in poor case when at length they reached the Hague and claimed the protection of the Duke of Burgundy.

A fugitive king is a very awkward visitor, and Charles by no means rejoiced at his coming. He privately advanced his brother-in-law 50,000 gold florins, but for fear of arousing enmity with the new rulers of England, he publicly announced that no one was to support him. He wrote a conciliatory letter which he sent by Commines to the English deputy, pointing out that he was of the blood of Lancaster, and that his alliance with Edward IV was chiefly one of commerce which he earnestly wishes to continue. This was a subject which troubled him much at that time, as owing to the bad treatment which French subjects had received, Louis XI had forbidden his subjects to attend the fairs at Antwerp or to have any dealings with the Netherlands or other domains of the Duke of Burgundy. There was so much commerce at this period between England and the Netherlands, that this was in truth the great safeguard for peace between the Duke of Burgundy and the King of England, whoever he might be, for in these "Wars of the Roses" there were such quick transformation scenes that it is often doubtful who was the figure-head. For the hapless Henry VI was little more than a phantom king, a pale meek image of royalty, passive in the

strong hands of Warwick the King-maker. As Chastellain sees him from afar: "Y avait ung roy assis en chaière; autant y eust fait ung sac de laine . . . il etaut une ombre . . . le roy estoit subgect et muet comme ung veau couronné." (There was a king sitting on a throne as if he had been a sack of wool . . . he was a shadow . . . the King was subject and mute as a crowned calf.")

CHAPTER X

1470–2

Birth of the Dauphin (Charles VIII)—Death of Jean of Calabria—Success of Edward IV—Marguerite of Anjou taken Prisoner, and her Son slain after the Battle of Tewkesbury—Sixtus IV succeeds Paul II—Death of Charles Duke of Guienne—Invasion of France by the Duke of Burgundy—Gallant Defence of Beauvais.

On December 13, 1470, Louis wrote from Amboise to Dammartin the "Grand Maitre": "Mon frère de Guienne s'en alla hyer bien content; aussi la royne d'Angleterre et Madame de Warvic [Countess of Warwick] s'en yront demain. Mon frère le connestable et le maréschal Joachim s'en partiront demain ou samedi, et ung chascun s'en yra faire ses diligences. J'ay bien espérance que de vostre part vous les ferez bonnes. . . . Monseigneur de Torcy s'en yra demain. . . ."

When the Duke of Guienne found himself no longer the heir to the throne after the birth of the Dauphin, there was every cause to fear that he might recommence his intrigues, and the King bestowed fresh favours upon him to ensure his allegiance. He was still anxious to procure a Spanish bride for his brother, and

as Isabel of Castile was now married to Ferdinand of Aragon, there only remained the reputed daughter of King Enrique of Castile, Juana, known as la Beltraneja, then nine years old. An embassy was therefore sent to the Court of Enrique IV, which was received with much honour, and after a great public assembly—in which the King and Queen swore that Juana was really their daughter and she was acclaimed as heiress of the Crown of Castile—the betrothal with the Duke of Guienne was celebrated.

In honour of this event Charles of France gave a great tournament, to which his brother-in-law, the Prince of Viana, Gaston de Foix, came with a gallant company, and gained the prize. But he paid dearly for it, as he was wounded by a lance and died a few days later. After much dispute, it was settled that his two children, François Phœbus and Catherine of Foix, should remain in the care of their mother Madeleine, the sister of Louis XI, who took possession of the province to keep it for the children.

It was soon after this, on December 16, 1470, that France lost a powerful ally in Spain, by the sudden death of Jean of Calabria, one of the most famous captains of the age, at Barcelona. His gallant courage and genial courtesy had won all hearts, and as he was borne in state, with his victorious sword by his side, to the tomb of the sovereigns of Catalonia, his bier was followed by a mourning people. He had recently gained a great victory over Juan II, and he seemed to be on the point of conquering all Catalonia. His death happened at a fortunate moment for the King of Aragon, and there was the usual suspicion of poison, but apparently without foundation. He had married Marie

of Bourbon, and left one son, Nicholas of Lorraine, Marquess du Pont, who was betrothed to Anne of France.

After his death, all hopes of Aragon melted away from his father René, for the King of France was too much engaged with more immediate dangers near home, to have any forces to spare for his allies in the south. He had done his utmost to befriend Marguerite of Anjou, to whom her brother's death was a great sorrow.

War was now inevitable between France and Burgundy, but before commencing hostilities, Louis summoned a great council at Tours, not this time of the States-General, but advisers of his own personal selection, and amongst them were many of the most learned and wisest men of the kingdom. The unanimous decision appears to have been that the King and his subjects were released from all obligations to the Duke of Burgundy, on account of his treason and perfidy; and it was decided that he should be summoned to appear before the Parlement of Paris. The audacity of such a summons took by surprise the indignant Charles, who was at that moment trying to take possession of the Duchy of Guelders. He found himself in a most difficult position, for he had scarcely an ally, and some of his own nobles, such as his half-brother, the famous Bastard of Burgundy, fled to the French Court, where they were well received. The Duke had no standing army like that of Louis, and while he was assembling his feudal levies, the war began in Picardy, where St. Pol took the town of St. Quentin, and Dammartin threatened Abbeville and Amiens. Charles wrote angry letters to both the generals, summoning

the Constable to serve him as his vassal, and abusing Antoine de Chabannes, who at once sent him the following brave reply :—

"'Très haut et puissant prince' . . . leaving aside all the subtleties imagined by the men of law, I write as a man more used to handle the sword than the pen . . . as touching the matter of Conflans, and that undertaking for the Bien Public, which ought truly to have been called le Mal Public, if then I did not serve the King, it was not by my fault. . . ." He then reproaches the Duke for having abused the confidence of the King who knew not the danger in which he placed himself, "et vous êtes emparé de sa personne; peril dont la bonté infinié de Dieu l'a preservé, si bien que vous ne pûtes venir à vos fins. Avec la grace de Dieu, ainsi en sera-t-il encore de vos intentions obliques et occultes." Then he ends with : "'Très haut et puissant prince,'" nothing has remained to you but shame and dishonour . . . for these things will remain an eternal memory for all princes born and to be born. . . . If I write things which displease you, and that you desire to revenge yourself on me, I trust that before the feast ends, you will find me so near your army that you will know how little fear I have of you. . . . These letters are written by me, Antoine de Chabannes, Comte de Dammartin, grand-maitre de l'hotel de France et lieutenant general pour le roi en la ville de Beauvais, lequel très humblement vous a écrit."

The orders which Dammartin had received from the King were to follow the army of Burgundy, which was now reinforced by the fine cavalry of the feudal levies and excellent artillery, to harass it, to cut off the foraging parties and the supplies. Above all, he was

to make a strong resistance if Amiens, which had surrendered to him, should be attacked. The King himself was at Beauvais with the Dukes of Guienne and Bourbon, the young Nicholas of Calabria, and a host of knights and men-at-arms, all in the most splendid discipline. His generals pressed him to attack the Duke of Burgundy in force, but Louis remained true to his principle not to risk his fortune to the chance of a pitched battle, a lesson which he had learnt at Montl'héry. His tactics were so successful that Charles before long made overtures of peace, and a truce was concluded for three months on April 14, 1471, which left Amiens and St. Quentin in the hands of the King. Dammartin was furious at having his foes thus generously treated when he looked forward to nothing less than their complete defeat, for the Duke was attacked on all sides, and had just supplied Edward IV with men and money which he could ill spare.

This assistance was invaluable to the cause of the White Rose, for Edward had landed in England a month before, on March 14, and meeting with the most extraordinary success, had been joined by fresh adherents in his victorious course until at the battle of Barnet, on April 14, fought in a dense fog, the Earl of Warwick and his brother were both slain, and there was nothing to prevent Edward from marching into London in triumph, and sending the unfortunate Henry back to the Tower as a prisoner once more. Marguerite of Anjou and her son landed at Weymouth on the very day of the battle, having been delayed by bad weather, and her first impulse was to seek sanctuary at Beaulieu Abbey in her

despair at the bad news. But she was soon persuaded by the Duke of Somerset and other nobles of her party, to begin a fresh campaign, and the people of Cornwall and Devon flocked to her standard. At Gloucester the gates of the city were closed against her, and after a fatiguing march she reached Tewkesbury, within three miles of her enemy, King Edward. Next morning, on May 4, was fought the great battle in which the hopes of the House of Lancaster were utterly crushed. Queen Marguerite was taken prisoner, her son Edward was slain on the field of battle, murdered, according to some accounts, by King Edward himself. His conduct was certainly cruel and treacherous, for having given his oath to spare the fugitives who had taken refuge in the abbey-church, he put them all to death two days later. On the very night of his triumphant arrival in London, King Henry VI died in his prison, and although it was prolaimed that his death was caused by "pure displeasure and melancholy," nobody believed it. A touch of deeper tragedy is added by the fact that on that fatal night, the unfortunate Marguerite was brought as a prisoner to the Tower, in the close neighbourhood of the husband she was never to see again. She remained in England until the year 1475, when, on peace being made with France, Louis XI was permitted to ransom her for 50,000 crowns, and she returned to her own land.

The firm establishment of King Edward on the throne of England was a great blow to the King of France, and his enemies at once began to plot against him. The King of Aragon, who had taken possession of Catalonia on the death of Jean of Calabria, pre-

pared to attack Roussillon. The Duke of Guienne left his brother's Court, and began openly to make advances to the Duke of Burgundy and sue for the hand of his daughter Marie. This young Princess was the bait which her father dangled before the eyes of all the marriageable princes of Europe, amongst whom we may mention Charles of France, Nicholas of Calabria, Philibert of Savoy, Charles the Dauphin, Maximilian of Austria, and others; but although she was nominally betrothed to most of them at one time or other, Charles had not the slightest intention of encumbering himself with a son-in-law.

To the Duke the revolution in England was a great triumph, and he had sumptuous rejoicings in the city of Ghent. Edward IV freely recognized his services, and wrote to thank him for his kind hospitality and his valuable help. But it is curious to note that the King of England could not be induced to enter into a league founded on the marriage of Charles of France with Marie of Burgundy, as he foresaw that in the event of Charles ever coming to the throne of France, the addition of the great domains of Burgundy would make him too powerful a rival.

Louis at this time found three of his allies drawn away from him by the hope of winning the heiress of Burgundy, young Nicholas of Calabria, the Prince of Savoy, and his own brother, who refused to be bound by the solemn vows he had made. At last, in despair, Louis turned to his chief enemy, the Duke of Burgundy himself, and actually proposed the marriage of Marie, now fifteen years old, with the Dauphin of a year, as the basis of a new alliance against Brittany and Guienne; he also proposed to restore the towns he had taken in

Picardy. Charles was quite willing to treat, but he insisted that the towns should be given up before he would sign, and several months were spent in vain negotiations. During this time Louis was called in to help his sister Yolande Duchess of Savoy, who was held captive by her brothers-in-law. He sent the Count of Cominges with a considerable force, and in joint command he placed his young nephew, Charles Prince of Piedmont, who had been brought up at his Court, and who was eager to go to the relief of his mother. But it unfortunately chanced that the young Prince of fifteen, a most promising lad to whom his uncle Louis was devoted, fell ill, and died at Orleans. The Count of Cominges had to continue his expedition alone; he surprised the castle of Aspremont by night, and conducted the Duchess Yolande and her suite in safety to Grenoble. Through the efforts of her brother Louis, peace was concluded in Savoy, and Philippe de Bresse was henceforth a faithful friend of the King, who gave him command of his troops in the south, the collar of the Order of St. Michael, and a company of a hundred lances. Philippe married Marguerite of Bourbon in January, 1471, and had two children, Philibert le Beau who succeeded him and married later Marguerite of Austria, and Louise, known to history as the mother of Francis I.

In July of this year France lost a faithful friend in Pope Paul II., who was succeeded by the General of the Franciscans, Sixtus IV. Louis at once sent an ambassador to the new Pope to explain the position in which the Duke of Guienne was placed, and to oppose the dispensation for his marriage with Marie of Burgundy.

There is a curious letter of Louis to the Seigneur du Bouchage, *maître d'hôtel* of his brother Charles, written on August 18, 1471, which is worth quoting in part. "With regard to the marriage of Foix (with Eleanore, daughter of Gaston IV de Foix) you know the harm it would do, and for that use your five senses (V^e^) to prevent it. . . . If the Duke will only take a suitable wife, as long as I live I will have no suspicion of him, and he shall have as much power or more than I have in the kingdom of France. In short, Monseigneur du Bouchage, if you can gain this point, you will place me in Paradise; and remain over there as long as Monseigneur de Lescun . . . if you have to feign illness, and before you leave, put our matter in safety, if you can, I pray you. . . ." Then he adds that he hears of the illness of Marie, but in point of fact it was her grandmother, Isabelle of Portugal, who was desperately ill, but who lived on till the following December.

The plague raged through France all that autumn, and was so bad at Amboise that for some time the Court could not go there. Charles of France, who led a most licentious and dissipated life, was in very bad health, and a letter of the King's has these remarks on December 2: "Des nouvelles de monseigneur de Guienne, il est toujours empiré depuis mes autres lettres; et l'ont porté en litière à une ville qui s'appelle Jaune (Geaune, dep. Landes)." A month later Louis receives a letter which says: "Monseigneur de Guienne is very ill, whatever they may say (of a quartan fever), and has caused himself to be carried in a litter to Bordeaux, and they say that from there he is going to Paris, but *par ma foy*, I do not believe it con-

Photo by W. A. Mansell & Co.

HENRY VI, KING OF ENGLAND

After the painting in the National Portrait Gallery, London

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sidering what I hear. . . ." While all around him despaired of his life, Charles continued to send embassies to the Duke of Burgundy, pressing that the marriage might be hastened, and plotting on all sides.

On May 18, the King writes to Dammartin: ". . . Since the last letters which I wrote you, I have had news that Monseigneur de Guienne is dying, and that there is no remedy in his case; and one of the most private . . . he has with him has made it known to me by express, and they do not think that he will be alive in fifteen days from this time. . . ." In point of fact the Duke of Guienne died on May 25, 1472, at the age of twenty-three. His death was a terrible blow to all the King's enemies, for the weak and untrustworthy Prince had always been the pretext and rallying point of all conspiracies. The Duke of Burgundy in his rage and disappointment made no scruple of accusing Louis; "il venait de faire mourir son frère par poison, maléfices, sortiléges et invocations diaboliques; . . ." He even went so far as to accuse the King of parricide, heresy, and idolatry; he proclaimed a crusade against him, quoting texts from the Bible, and offering to provide men and money. The Duke advanced no proof of his outrageous assertions, and gave no details of any accomplices; while the King published no refutation. No doubt he thought it unworthy of him to condescend to any answer to such calumnies, which no one who has studied the whole history of Charles' illness and death can for one moment believe. An historian who is usually unfriendly to the King remarks: "I unhesitatingly acquit Louis of his brother's murder. The most circumstantial witness against him, Brantôme, is worthless. . . ."

It is interesting to remember that about this time first began the custom of the "Angelus," when Louis XI on May 1, 1472, caused a great procession to be made in Paris, and other cities, and especially entreated that henceforth at mid-day, each one should bend a knee to the ground and say an "Ave Maria" for the peace of the realm. Gifts were bestowed later upon the churches in order that three times a day the great bell might "sonner trois coups pour avertir de réciter la Salutation angélique." It has so long been the custom to accuse Louis of superstition and hypocrisy, that it may seem strange to suggest that he had deep religious feeling, and that his splendid offerings to churches, his many pilgrimages, and his constant prayers to God, the Virgin, and the saints, were the usual custom of devout Christians in his age. We may remember that, as a boy of fourteen, his great anxiety was to have a "chapelle portative."

On the death of the Duke of Guienne, the fief returned to the Crown of France and was at once occupied by the royal troops, while Pierre Lord of Beaujeu, the future husband of Anne of France, was appointed Governor of the province. The household and adherents of his brother were well received by the King, but as Charles of Burgundy watched the course of events from afar, his fury knew no bounds. Without waiting for the end, he crossed the River Somme with his army at the beginning of June, and as he advanced with fire and sword, the little town of Nesle, defended by five hundred archers, was the first place to resist. After a day of hard fighting, the captain saw that resistance was useless, and at daybreak, next morning, he came forth with the Countess de Nesle to capitulate. As he returned,

at the very moment when his archers were told to lay down their arms, the city gates were opened by some of the inhabitants, and the men of Burgundy rushed in and sacked the town with every kind of violence and outrage; even the old people, and the women and children, who had taken refuge in the church, being ruthlessly massacred. Some of the archers who were spared, lost their right hand, and the brave commander was hung. "Tel fruit porte l'arbre de guerre," said the Duke, as he rode into the desecrated church, trampling upon the slain.

Terror-struck by this horrible event, the garrisons of Roye and Montdidier surrendered without a blow. When the King received news of these disasters he was at Angers on the borders of Brittany with a large force, as he hoped to prevent the Duke François combining with Burgundy. He wrote at once to Dammartin:—

". . . I have good hope that God will help us to avenge ourselves, seeing the murders committed in the church, as elsewhere, on those who believed their lives to be safe, in surety and confidence in the capitulation they had made. . . . P.S.—If the said place had been dismantled . . . as I ordered, this would not have happened; and on this account take care that all similar places be 'rasées'; for if it be not done, we shall lose the people therein, "which will be to me increasing dishonour and injury.

June 19, 1472. LOYS."

There is another very interesting letter of Louis to St. Pol, on receiving the bad news from him, which shows his keen interest in every detail of the war, and

also his advanced ideas on strategy. . . . "My opinion has always been that you should not hold either Roye or Montdidier, nor place men-at-arms in any place which is not capable of defence; and it is no wonder if this gain of the Duke of Burgundy makes him proud and alarms our people. By the letters which our captains write to you, you ought not to leave men-at-arms in Noyon, but rather dismantle it and hold Compiègne well. . . . With regard to weak places, he gains nothing when he takes them, but weakens himself, for he is obliged to leave behind men of his company. . . . As to what you say to me that I should advance (to you), I ought to-morrow to hear news of Brittany if they will give up Burgundy or not. . . . Above all (he repeats), do not leave men-at-arms in places which are not tenable, and place as many in the field as you can to harass his host and break his army; and take good care of Compiègne, for the first place which can resist him, it will be to his undoing. . . ."

Never was a truer word spoken, as we shall see by the siege of Beauvais, which made one of the most heroic defences ever told in history.

Charles of Burgundy had not ventured to attack Compiègne and Amiens which had strong garrisons, but he passed on to Beauvais, in a fertile valley surrounded by wooded hills—an ancient fortified city, but without any garrison save some feudal levies which had taken refuge here on the surrender of Roye. Philippe de Crévecœur, who commanded the vanguard, arrived before Beauvais on Saturday, June 27, 1472, and thinking to take it at once by assault, made an attack on the Porte de Bresle, where his cannon made a great breach. The men of France fought hand to hand with

the besiegers at the breach in the wall, "and some of the inhabitants brought kindled faggots to throw in the faces of those who were forcing the gate, which broke out in flames, and caused the men of Burgundy to retreat," says Commines, who was an eye-witness. News of the Duke's cruelty had roused in the citizens a passionate determination to defend their homes to the last. They thronged the walls with such arms as they could collect, while the women supplied them with ammunition, and bravely joined with them in throwing down boiling water or pitch on the heads of those who tried to scale the walls. One young girl, known to fame as Jeanne la Hachette, especially distinguished herself; a Burgundian had planted his standard on the battlement, when she tore it from him and hurled him into the ditch below.

The burning gateway still remained a barrier of impassable flames, for the inhabitants resolutely kept up the great fire by sacrificing not only their tables and chairs, but even the doors and wooden gables of their houses. When the Duke arrived with his artillery, he was much incensed at this opposition, and swore to destroy the city and leave not one soul alive in it. But he neglected one important point, and did not invest the southern side where two small streams, tributaries of the Oise, divide Beauvais. Meantime messengers had been sent out in all directions, and reinforcements soon arrived from the neighbouring towns, and could freely enter from the river side. The garrison of Noyon rode fifteen leagues on a hot June day to help in the gallant defence, and hastened at once to the ramparts, leaving their horses to the women's care. At night, new defences were built up behind the breaches in the

walls, and the flames in the fiery gateway were never suffered to burn low.

The next day more help arrived: the greater part of the garrison of Amiens, the Maréschal Rouhault with one hundred lances, several companies with artillery, and many gentlemen of Normandy, who were full of enthusiasm at this splendid defence. An outdoor banquet was held in the streets to feast the defenders, and women carried round cups of wine to the soldiers on the ramparts. All were animated by the same gallant spirit; the city should not be taken while one living soul remained to man the walls. The clergy bore through the streets in solemn procession the relics of Saint Angradesma their patroness, who was believed to have saved Beauvais when the English besieged it in vain in 1433.

For ten days longer Charles of Burgundy continued to bombard the place, and the walls were broken down in many parts, but provisions and ammunition of war continued to pour in, while there were constant arrivals of fresh auxiliaries. The Provost of Paris came with three thousand men-at-arms and some city cross-bowmen; Rouen, Orleans, and other cities sent all they could spare, until, as Commines says, the garrison was strong enough to defend the hedge of a field, and needed no fortified walls. Successful sallies were made, and the position of the Duke became serious, for his camp was short of provisions, as Dammartin continued to hang on his rear and cut off his convoys, while heavy rains now flooded the valley and made his position more difficult. At length in sullen rage, Charles was compelled to give way, and he broke up his camp during the night of July 22, and continued his course

into Normandy, carrying fire and sword wherever he went.

Louis had been watching from afar, with intense interest, the progress of the siege of Beauvais; he sent various letters to encourage his good subjects, and gave numerous orders for help of all kinds to be sent them. In thankfulness that "Dieu m'a donné ceste ville" he made a vow to eat no meat until a town in silver, at the cost of 1200 ecus, should have been presented to the church of St. Martin of Tours. Nor did he neglect to reward the gallant citizens; they were not to be called to the "arrière-ban," but were to wear their war accoutrement and stay to defend their city if need were. They were to be exempt from taxes and to be free to choose their own mayor and other officials. As for the brave women, they were to walk in the yearly procession of the relics of their patron saint, preceding the men, and immediately after the clergy. They might wear any adornments they pleased, in defiance of all sumptuary laws, on their wedding day and at other times. Jeanne Laisné (la Hachette) was specially rewarded; and the King, who loved match-making, married her to one of his officers, Colin Pilon, and by royal letters, exempted them and their descendants from "tailles, du guet et de la garde des portes."

CHAPTER XI

1472–4

PHILIPPE DE COMMINES ENTERS THE SERVICE OF LOUIS XI—TREATY WITH BRITTANY—CHARLES OF BURGUNDY DISAPPOINTED BY THE EMPEROR—LOUIS HAS TROUBLE WITH ARMAGNAC, ALENÇON, AND RENÉ OF ANJOU—MARRIAGE OF THE KING'S DAUGHTERS, ANNE TO PIERRE DE BEAUJEU AND JEANNE TO LOUIS OF ORLEANS—TREATY OF PERPIGNAN.

AFTER raising the siege of Beauvais, the Duke of Burgundy moved by slow marches to the right bank of the Seine, devastating the fertile and prosperous Pays de Caux from the walls of Rouen to those of Dieppe. The crops were destroyed, the villages and farmhouses burned, and the fortresses seized and dismantled, till by his massacres and destruction he earned the surname of Charles the Terrible. His obstinacy and cruelty were so great that he was a terror in his own camp, so that some of his most trusted counsellors forsook him, and amongst them the chronicler Philippe de Commines. The story of his flight is thus told. The Duke had taken the little town of St. Valery on the coast, and was encamped near Eu, when on the night between the 7th and 8th of August, 1472, his favourite chamberlain was reported to have left the camp. The vengeance of the outraged prince was prompt and decisive. At 6 a.m. on the morning of the

FREDERICK III

From an old engraving by VAN SOMPEL

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8th, Charles signed a document confiscating all the estates of the fugitive.

From the time of his meeting with Louis XI at Péronne, Commines had been attracted towards him, and this feeling had been strengthened in the summer of 1471, when he had been sent on a mission to the King of France. To forsake the master whom he had served for ten years was a strong step for this young courtier of twenty-seven, but we cannot tell what provocation he may have had, for he is silent with regard to his motives. He only remarks in his Memoirs: "About this time, I came into the King of France's service . . . the King was then at Pont de Cé, having assembled all his forces against the Duke of Brittany, with whom he was at war."

Commines was warmly welcomed, and Louis could not do enough to show his gratitude to the man who had stood by him in the most perilous moment of his life, in the castle of Péronne. He had great estates given him, the title of Prince of Talmont, and the following January he married Hélène, the daughter of the Lord of Montsoreau, with a dowry of 20,000 écus d'or. Henceforth Commines was a faithful and devoted friend of the King, but he never forgot his obligations to his former master, and always spoke of him with the utmost kindness. He was now an eye-witness of the life of Louis, but his Memoirs were chiefly written so long after, that we cannot always trust his statement of facts.

At this time the King was making steady progress in Brittany; Chantocé was besieged and taken, then the royal army attacked Ancenis on July 6, and entered the town the next day almost without resistance. He

was advancing along the bank of the Loire towards Nantes, when the Duke in despair, sent to beg for help from Edward IV, who had promised to send troops to his assistance. But Lescun, his chief minister, was always enough of a patriot to dread an alliance with England, and he was quite willing to listen to the renewed offers of Louis. After much discussion, during which extravagant offers of lands and money were made to Lescun personally, he used his influence with his master to such good purpose that a treaty was soon concluded with Brittany. Money was not spared with Duke François, who besides receiving a large pension, had several strong places returned to him.

A truce of five months was also agreed upon in November, 1472, with Charles of Burgundy, who now found himself deserted by his allies; and this was renewed at frequent intervals until May, 1475, when after some desultory fighting, a lasting peace was made which endured for the rest of Charles' life. As he had found the French monarchy too strong for him, his ambition now turned towards the east and the south; "he strove to gather together province after province . . . he would form a state which should hem in the hostile realm from the North Sea to the Mediterranean." In the year 1469, the Duke had already occupied Alsace, which had been pawned to him for 10,000 florins by Sigismund Duke of Austria, and he took possession of Guelders and Zutphen in 1473. In August of that year, Nicholas of Calabria died suddenly of the plague at Nancy, as he was preparing to besiege Metz. Tempted by that irresistible lure of Marie of Burgundy, the young Prince had broken his troth with Anne of France, and his death released the Duke of

Burgundy from promises which he never meant to keep, and gave him the chance of adding Lorraine to his dominions. Nicholas had been the last male heir of his grandmother, Isabelle of Lorraine, and the next in succession was Yolande his aunt, who yielded her rights to her son, René of Vaudemont, at this time twenty-two years of age. He took possession on the 4th of August, and the Duke of Burgundy at once imprisoned both Yolande and her son. She appealed to Louis, who promptly sent an army to the borders of Lorraine, and procured their freedom. Disappointed in this attempt, the Duke turned more earnestly to his negotiations with the Emperor Frederick III. He had already offered the hand of his daughter to Maximilian, the Emperor's son, in return for being made King of the Romans, and a princely income for Marie, but he now asked much more.

As Metz refused to surrender its keys or receive a large company within its walls, Charles met the Emperor at Trèves, where they discussed terms for five weeks without coming to a conclusion. Frederick was willing to receive homage for Guelders, but Lorraine was to be restored to the young Duke René, as a hostage for whose safety a nephew of the Emperor's, then studying in Paris, was retained. Charles certainly expected to be crowned by the Emperor, for sceptre and regal robes and diadem were made ready, and the church of Trèves was richly decorated and provided with two thrones, one for Frederick and the other for the expectant king. As Freeman tells the story: "We laugh when Charles has got everything ready for his coronation at Trèves, and the Lord of the World suddenly decamps in the night, leaving the ex-

pectant king of Burgundy or Lorraine, or whatever his kingdom was to be, to go back a mere duke as he came." With the memory of Péronne in his mind, Frederick, having his suspicions roused on the marriage question, sailed away quietly and swiftly down the Moselle, and was soon out of reach of pursuit. We may imagine how furious the imperious Duke was at thus being exposed to the ridicule of Europe.

Louis had taken advantage of a time of peace to deal with various matters of state, of which we find a minute account in the many letters written by him at this period. On the death of his Chancellor, the distinguished jurisconsult Juvenal des Ursins, he appointed as his successor Pierre Doriole, an excellent lawyer of great independence of character, who had formerly been in the service of Charles of France. He gives concessions to the chapters of Langres, of Nôtre-Dame de Selles, and others; forbids that the men of Lyons should be taxed for lands outside their city, institutes several new fairs, gives remissions for the breaking of rules in the markets, and confirms all the gifts of his brother Charles. Louis gives repeated orders that the supposed poisoners of the Duke of Guienne should be publicly tried. We also have a curious mention of certain French wines, which the president of the Driesche calls *clairot*. (Would this be claret?)

We next find him dealing with several traitors, such as the Count of Armagnac, who had been condemned by the Parliament in 1470 and then forgiven by the King, until in 1472 he took the Sire de Beaujeu and others, prisoners by treachery at Lectourne. Here he was besieged by the royal troops and lost his life in

the mêlée, when the town was given over to pillage and destruction on March 6, 1473. The Duke of Alençon also could never keep out of any rebellion going, and was condemned to death by the Parliament in May, 1472, yet his royal godson forgave him again, and he was only kept in honourable imprisonment in the Louvre. On his death in 1475, Louis secured the succession of his estates to his son René, Count de la Perche. But of all traitors there was none so faithless as the Count of St. Pol, who betrayed both the King and the Duke of Burgundy, and was destined later to meet his just reward from them both.

Even the King's uncle, René of Anjou, although he had not openly joined the enemies of France, had approved the dishonourable conduct of his grandson Nicholas, and was in constant communication with the Duke of Burgundy, having taken up his abode at Aix, to be somewhat nearer to him. Possibly his dreamy romantic character prevented his being a serious danger, but we can scarcely wonder that when he left Anjou to take the side of Charles, the King of France undertook the administration of that province, so perilously near Brittany. In spite of all his failings, our sympathies are with "René le Bon" in his bereaved old age, overwhelmed by a fatality of deaths —his only son, the brave Jean; his brother, the Count de Maine; his grandsons, the Prince of Wales and young Nicholas, of whom, by the irony of fortune, René himself was now the heir. He bore through life the barren title of King of Sicily, and both the crowns of Naples and Aragon seemed at one time to be within his grasp. Yet no one could have been more unfitted to win kingdoms by force of arms, for his chief delight

was ever in art and poetry, and in quiet pastoral repose. Perhaps his happiest moments were when he sang in the choir of his chapel, dressed as a canon, on a Gothic throne which he had carved and painted himself. The gentle René is one of the most picturesque figures of his period, whether sitting at his desk in a sunny window painting birds, composing ballades and rondels, or the genial host of a gay, pleasure-loving Court. After the death of his beloved Isabelle, "la vaillante Lorraine, qui avait fait la guerre pour lui . . .," he had taken a second wife, the charming young Jeanne de Laval, when he had attained the age of forty-seven.

It is worthy of notice that at the very time when René was playing at treason with Charles of Burgundy, Louis XI writes, on July 18, 1473, to the Chapter of Rheims, to insist that no opposition shall be made to his appointment of Pierre de Laval, Jeanne's brother, as Archbishop. He had always upheld the House of Anjou in their struggles for Naples and for Aragon, both in men and money; he had given his uncle the collar of St. Michael, and had done his utmost to befriend the unhappy Marguerite, whom he was soon to ransom from an English prison.

Amongst the most important events of the year 1473 in the personal history of Louis, is the marriage of his two daughters. We have seen how, almost from her birth, Anne of France, born at Génappe in 1461, was betrothed to Nicholas of Calabria. There is a legend that she always had a romantic attachment for this young Prince, and wore his ring until her death. But this did not prevent her from making a reasonably happy marriage with Pierre de Bourbon, Lord of

Beaujeu, who had been unexpectedly chosen by her father for this great honour. He had been more than once in rebellion, like so many other nobles, but Louis had a keen insight into character, and having once won over Bourbon to his cause, he felt that here was a man of royal blood, yet not too near the throne, whom he could trust to help and protect the Dauphin in days to come. The marriage contract was signed on November 13, 1473, and the stipulations are always that all goods are to be returned to the Crown if there are no children of the marriage. The King gave 1,000,000 écus of dowry with Anne, to whom he was much attached, and who had already been made Viscountess of Thouars, and was later Countess of Gien. At the time of her marriage, Anne was not quite thirteen and the bridegroom was twenty-one years older, but she was a bright, capable girl, extremely well educated, and with plenty of common sense. Pierre de Bourbon was noted for his "douceur et humilité," and so far as we can learn from "the fierce light which beats upon" royal personages, the husband and wife appear to have lived happily together. The praise of Anne, "l'Aisnée fille de France," has been written in a hundred verses, of which we select one :—

> Pour son entrée de Moulins
> Trois triomphes y avoit seurement,
> Tous pleins de très beaux musequins
> Et parés très richement,
> Qui parloient honnestement,
> Et prioient Dieu de Paradis
> Qu'il leur donnast un très beau filz.

The little town of Jargeau welcomed the royal married pair with such lavish magnificence that they

gave fêtes which lasted eight days, and the King was so pleased with their loyalty that he bestowed upon the town "un blason de gueules chargé de trois bracelets d'or, avec le chef de France, d'azur, à trois fleurs de lys d'or."

The story of Anne's younger sister is a very different one. Jeanne de France was born at Nogent-le-Roy on May 15, 1464, into a world where she was not warmly welcomed, for her coming was a disappointment when an heir to the throne was so anxiously looked for. Her fate was soon decided for, a few days after her birth, Jeanne was betrothed to Louis, the two-year-old son of Charles d'Orléans, the King's uncle, and before the death of the old worn-out Duke the following January, the treaty of marriage between the two children was actually signed. "Le mariage sera celébré lorsque les futurs seront en âge compétent." The King gives to his daughter 100,000 écus of dowry, with the usual robes and jewels. The Duke guarantees to her "un douaire" of 6000 livres de rente, and for abode in case of widowhood, La Ferté-Milan and Brie.

The two daughters had remained for a time with their mother, and when the kingdom was in revolt during the League of "le Bien Public," Louis confided the care of the Queen and the little Princesses to the people of Amboise, and sent twenty brigandines to protect them. When Jeanne was five years old, a chamberlain and cousin of the King's, François de Bourbon, Seigneur de Linières, was chosen as her "gouverneur," and she was taken to live under the care of his wife in the château de Linières, "au fond du Berry." For some reason which is not fully explained, the Queen, Charlotte of Savoy, went to live

JEANNE DE FRANCE, DAUGHTER OF LOUIS XI

From an old print

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in Dauphiné at this time, but it seems strange that her delicate little daughter should not have remained with her. The new home of Jeanne was a grim old castle, a fortress with massive feudal walls and battlements, which was entered by crossing a double rampart. After the first bridge came a high tower, "la tour du Guet," then the drawbridge, the moat being filled with the waters of the Arnon, while under the towers were dungeons and oubliettes. This gloomy place of terror was far away from any town, being five leagues from Issoudun and ten from Bourges. (It was destroyed in 1561 by the Huguenots.)

What a strange solitude for a fragile little girl! It is true that from the upper court of the château where Jeanne took her walks, she could see below the smiling valley of the Arnon, and look out from afar on the course of the winding river through fertile plains to the forests beyond. We hear of the little Princess as a silent, dreamy child, whose deformity poisoned her existence, for she was small and crooked, with one shoulder higher than the other, though with a pleasing, gentle face. She learnt to live alone, to look upon herself as set apart from earth, and began to turn her thoughts early towards heaven. At five years old she had as her confessor a certain Gilbert Nicolas, one of the Frères Mineurs of Amboise, who became much attached to her and remained faithful to her during all her troubled life. Can we wonder that in that strange brooding solitude, Jeanne began to hear voices and to see visions? Her guardian and his wife were kind to her, and usually remained in the country with her although they had an hotel at Bourges; but they were not often in the town, where the plague raged from

time to time. They received for her living, we are told, 1200 francs a year. Once when the little girl was recovering from small-pox, Madame de Linières wrote to ask the Queen if Jeanne might pay her a visit for change of air, and Charlotte wrote to the Sire de Bouchage to ask the King's permission. It is difficult to believe that she arrived dressed like a peasant, with a "camelot grossier, dechiré aux coudes et rapelassé . . ." as one writer says.

The marriage contract was signed between Jeanne of France and Louis of Orleans on October 28, and ratified the next day by Marie of Clèves, the mother of Louis and widow of Charles, Duke of Orleans. We are told that the Duchess made all the opposition she dared to this marriage, for after the death of Nicholas of Calabria she had always hoped that Anne would be the bride of Louis her son, and not this "femme ainsi difforme!" as she is said to have called the bride when she first saw her. Poor little Jeanne had no wish for marriage; she only longed to devote herself to religion in the cloistered life, and when on September 6, 1476, the actual religious ceremony took place at the castle of Montrichard, her real martyrdom began. The Pope's permission was given, for the bride and bridegroom were cousins-german, but neither the King nor the Duchess of Orleans appear to have been present. The Bishop of Orleans was the celebrant, and the Queen was with her daughter who wore a robe of cloth of gold, (afterwards made into a chasuble).

It is difficult to make out the exact truth with regard to the protests which Louis, now a boy of fourteen, is said to have made, as most of the chronicles were actually written during his reign, when he was so des-

perately eager to obtain a divorce and marry Anne of Brittany. But there seems no doubt that both the children were unhappy. Jeanne went back to Linières after the wedding, and is reported to have said: "Je ne ouserais parler à luy, car vous et chascun veoit bien qu'il ne fait conte de moy." Madame of Orleans, as she now was, never complained, but patiently endured misfortune, loneliness, and contempt, until she was looked upon by all who knew her as a saint—"La bienheureuse Jeanne."

Always intensely interested in all that concerned the commercial prosperity of his kingdom, we find Louis signing a treaty on August 15, 1473, at Mont-Saint-Michel, with the deputies of the Hansa League. He confirmed all the privileges which the League held from the kings his predecessors, allowing the "Osterling merchants" to trade freely by land and water in all the towns of France, and to have agents everywhere, giving the same freedom of exchange to his own subjects. This treaty appears to have been partly drawn up by the ambassadors of Scotland and Denmark, who were then with the King. On August 16, he himself wrote to the "excellents et magnifiques orateurs et deputés de la hanse Teutonique presentement assemblés à Utrecht" to inform them of the contract, and assure them of his good will. Louis suffered no political feeling to interfere with the welfare of his subjects, or he might have objected to the great friendship of the Hansa League with Edward IV, to whom they always gave the title of King of England *and France.*

In the spring of this year, the men of Roussillon rose in rebellion against the French, and drove them out of the strong castles of Salces and Collioure; but

at Perpignan the garrison retreated to the citadel and held out there for ten weeks, notwithstanding the fierce attack of the old King of Aragon, who, in his turn, was besieged by a strong force under Philippe de Bresse. This turbulent Prince, who had given so much trouble in Savoy, was quite loyal to France now that he was in command and had plenty of fighting. Juan II, (who had recovered his sight by an operation for cataract performed by a Jewish physician), behaved with splendid courage and energy, until, weakened by pestilence, the French were compelled to make a truce for two months. During this time, Louis XI with his usual policy of diplomacy rather than war, persuaded the King of Aragon to agree to the Treaty of Perpignan, signed in September, 1473, which we may justly consider impracticable. It was arranged that Roussillon and Cerdagne should be in the joint possession of the kings of France and Aragon, and ruled by a governor chosen by them both, according to the laws, customs, and privileges of the country ; until King Juan should have repaid the 200,000 crowns for which these counties had been pledged. This amount the King of Aragon engaged to pay within a year, otherwise Louis might appoint another governor of his own choice. The two kings reserved to themselves the right to help their former allies, should they wish to do so.

This treaty simply concerned the provinces of Roussillon and Cerdagne, and yet their fate, which appeared settled, was never less so in reality.

CHAPTER XII

1474—5

LEAGUE AGAINST BURGUNDY JOINED BY THE SWISS CONFEDERATION—CHARLES OF BURGUNDY BESIEGES NEUSS—WAR IN ROUSSILLON, WHICH IS RETAKEN BY FRANCE—SEDITION AT BOURGES—THE EMPEROR, FRANCE, THE SWISS, AND THE DUKE OF LORRAINE COMBINE AGAINST CHARLES, WHO RAISES THE SIEGE OF NEUSS—EDWARD IV INVADES FRANCE—PEACE OF PECQUIGNY—MEETING OF LOUIS XI AND EDWARD IV—TREATY WITH BURGUNDY—EXECUTION FOR TREASON OF ST. POL, CONSTABLE OF FRANCE.

WE have now reached an extremely important and interesting historical question, about which there has been much misunderstanding. How was it that Charles of Burgundy first found himself at war with the Swiss? We must remember that the real extent and position of the Swiss Confederation of that day, was very different from the present Switzerland. It was then called "the Great League of Upper Germany, or Swabia," and had grown from the three original cantons, Uri, Schwytz, and Unterwalden, joined in 1332 by Luzern, and in the middle of the fourteenth century by Zurich, Glarus, Zug, and Bern. These eight German cities and districts were united by a kind of federal bond: they were really independent commonwealths, but formed part of the holy Roman Empire, and were nominally subjects of

the Emperor. Instead of being, as we know them—a pastoral people of shepherds and mountaineers, ready to defend their combined cantons with heroic courage, but having neither the wish nor the power to invade their neighbours—in those days the League was an aggressive power, always extending its borders by conquest, purchase, and alliance.

In 1469, Sigismund of Austria, a nephew of the Emperor Frederick III, who had married Eleanor of Scotland, the sister of Margaret la Dauphine, became involved in a quarrel with the Swiss League, through his vassals in Alsace. Being of a peaceful disposition, when his lands were ravaged he bought peace with the promise of 10,000 florins, and in order to obtain the money, he pawned Alsace to the Duke of Burgundy, whose ambition was gratified at extending his influence. Charles sent his *maître-d'hôtel*, Pierre de Hagenbach, a man of fierce and violent temper, to take possession of this new land, which he soon drove to rebellion by his shameful abuse of his power. When complaints were made to the Duke of his excesses, Charles is said to have only replied: "It is enough that he suits me." The most serious matter was his insulting behaviour towards the Swiss, whose allies at Muhlhausen were attacked, their own territory invaded, their merchants going to Frankfort had been seized, and the men of Bern asserted that their messengers had been slain and their dispatches taken. The imperial towns of Strasburg, Schleestadt, and Colmar were threatened by Hagenbach, and the neighbouring barons of Swabia were furious at his insults. As for his personal conduct, it appears to have been brutal and vile beyond all words.

After his disappointment at Trèves, the Duke of Burgundy went through Lorraine with the air of a sovereign to his new dominion of Alsace, with only a force of about five thousand Lombard mercenaries. He was not well received although he tried to conciliate his new subjects ; but Hagenbach was always with him, even at Ensisheim, where an embassy from Bern had come to complain of the Governor. The Duke was looked upon with great suspicion by the Swiss League, as his negotiations at Trèves with the Emperor had convinced them that their territory, as well as Savoy and Milan, was to be included in the proposed *Kingdom* of Burgundy. The Council of Bern had warned Louis XI of this, and it was possibly at this time that he conceived the idea of including the League in a combination against Charles.

The unconquerable tenacity of the Swiss was known to him of old, for he could never forget that early expedition when he, a youth of twenty-one, was sent by his father to lead the mighty host of "écorcheurs" to the confines of Alsace and the Cantons, there to hurl themselves again and again upon a human barrier dauntless and ever renewed, until they came to a miserable end. Was not Duke Charles, in his rashness and arrogance, about to follow in the same path of destruction?

Sigismund of Austria, who could not see unmoved the misery of his late dominion of Alsace, offered his alliance to Louis, who accepted it only on condition that the Duke's ancestral enemies—the Swiss Cantons—should be included. Even this proved possible, and before long the Duke of Austria had joined in a league with the free cities of Alsace, the Margrave

of Baden, Basel, and Strasburg, and the eight Cantons of which Bern, Luzern, and Zurich were the most determined foes of Burgundy. Charles in vain remonstrated with them, for the next move in the game was that Sigismund received from his allies the 10,000 florins for which his dominions were pledged, and offered the amount to redeem them. But the Duke of Burgundy refused; "ce que je tiens, je garde," was his reply. Some of the towns in Alsace had already rebelled and driven out their Burgundian garrisons, and there was a violent sedition at Breisach, where the people took the law into their own hands and made the hated Hagenbach a prisoner. They summoned twenty-seven notable men as deputies from all the towns and nobles of the province, who after a brief form of trial condemned to death Pierre de Hagenbach for his crimes, public and private. He was beheaded on May 9, 1474, but it was an act of public vengeance rather than a legal execution, as his judges had no right of jurisdiction over him. Charles of Burgundy was furious when the news reached him, and he at once sent Etienne Hagenbach to devastate the whole country in revenge for his brother's fate.

The Duke was at this time engaged in a dispute about the archbishopric of Cologne, with regard to which his policy appears to have been very much the same as with the see of Liége formerly. If he could not annex the temporal possessions, at least he wished the Archbishop to be his creature. There was the whole Chapter and a very strong outside party against Robert of Bavaria, whom they had expelled, but Charles supported him by force of arms.

The Landgrave of Hesse and his brother Hermann, who had been chosen as administrator of the diocese, were besieged by the Duke in the strong fortress of Neuss, north of Cologne. Once a Roman military station, and now one of the Hansa towns, Neuss stood on a solitary height above the marshy plain, from whence the Rhine had receded for a mile or two, but was still available for traffic by means of a deep canal which received also the waters of the Erft. The place was well fortified with a double line of high walls, massive towers, bastions, and gates; while on the east side, the canal and swampy ground were most effective in defence. The traditions of the town proudly boasted of thirteen sieges triumphantly resisted: there was ample store of provisions, a garrison of three thousand Hessian men-at-arms and five hundred cavalry, besides the volunteers who came pouring in from Cologne and other cities.

This was the stronghold before which Charles of Burgundy encamped on July 30, 1474. He had a splendid army, with companies of ordonnance formed on the French model, the finest artillery of the day, a large body of Lombard mercenaries under the Count of Campo Basso, and about three thousand English archers. We have a very full account of the difficult investment and bombardment which followed, the varied fortunes of assaults and sorties, and the splendid gallantry with which during nearly eleven long months the beleaguered fortress was defended against the might of Burgundy.

Meantime Louis was not idle. As soon as the siege began, he sent envoys to the League of Upper Germany with orders to specially address the city of Bern,

where Nicolas von Diessbach was already bought over into his service. The extent to which the diplomacy of the French King caused the Cantons to take up arms against Charles of Burgundy, has always been a disputed point in history. Freeman inclines to the idea that it was one cause amongst several, and that the "Switenses" "might have acted as they did though Louis had never been born." They mistrusted the aggressive designs of Charles, the would-be King; they were indignant at the treatment of their new allies of Alsace; and when it was quite convenient to them, they prided themselves on obeying the summons of their Emperor. But they were also poor and quite willing to accept French gold, which was lavishly offered to them. We cannot enter into the question of the morality of bribes at a period when, with only the rarest exceptions, everybody accepted them. A treaty was ratified at Luzern in October, 1474, which, as Legeay remarks, has been the basis of all the treaties since made by France with the Swiss. It engages that the King will every year give 20,000 florins to the city of Bern, and that the League shall supply him with six thousand men in his wars and expeditions, at his request, and that he shall pay them at the rate of four and a half florins a month each.

A Diet had been held at Felsburg on October 9, when the deputies of the allied towns, the French envoys, and Sigismund in person, met an imperial embassy which brought a summons from Frederick III, calling upon the confederates, as members of the Empire, to defend it against the aggression of the Duke of Burgundy. The result of all this was that a message was enclosed in a herald's

staff and sent to Charles of Burgundy in his camp before Neuss. It ran thus: "That by command of the Emperor, and in defence of Alsace, the burgomasters . . . and commons of the League of Upper Germany declared war, whether in attack or defence, in the day or night, by slaying, burning, and plundering. . . ." When Charles saw the seal, he exclaimed in bitter rage, "Bern, Bern!"

While the siege of Neuss engaged all the energies of Burgundy, war had broken out again in Roussillon, for it was not to be expected that the joint occupation would be successful. The old King of Aragon carried on the struggle with the utmost vigour, notwithstanding his age and poverty, which was so great that he had to pawn his fur-lined mantle in order to pay his muleteers. He could obtain little help from his son, for civil war had broken out in Castile after the death of Enrique IV at the end of 1474. Louis wrote several letters at this time to Ferdinand, and in one of them, after expressing his sorrow at the death of the King of Castile, he adds: "But since it has pleased God to take him . . . we are consoled and very joyful that his succession has fallen to a prince so praiseworthy and virtuous as you are. . . ." Such were royal amenities, even to the son of a hostile king. Louis sends the most urgent directions to his captains in Roussillon to spare no efforts in bringing the campaign to a successful end; and on December 5, after an obstinate resistance, Elne was taken, and soon after one or two smaller places, which left the road clear to Perpignan, whose conquest was absolutely necessary for the submission of the province. Juan II was unable to do more than hover about with his small army on the frontiers of Roussillon, and watch from

afar the slow progress of the siege, without being able to strike a blow for his beleaguered capital. The men of Perpignan fought with heroism worthy of their brave ancestors, and it was not until they were reduced to absolute starvation that at length on March 14, 1475, they consented to an honourable capitulation.

After this, a truce of six months was concluded with the King of Aragon, which left France in possession of Roussillon and Cerdagne. There appear unfortunately to have been disturbances in Perpignan after the surrender, and Louis writes to the Seigneur de Bouchage and urges very severe treatment of those suspected of treachery. A list was made of about two hundred names, in which we find, "perayriers, sabattiers, marchans, tixerans, bourgeois, notaires . . ." with notes in the margin, "bad, very bad," and often what they were guilty of. Word is to be left for future governors that, if traitors return, "d'icy à vingt ans, qu'ils leur facent trancher les testes." This command brings out very strongly one point in the character of Louis: the cold, stern cruelty with which he can give a command like this, which he probably thought needful for the security of Perpignan. We shall see the same feeling in his treatment of a sedition at Bourges, when a tax was levied upon the inhabitants at this time, for the repair of their fortifications and other municipal expenses. The King believed that it had a political meaning, as several old adherents of the Duke of Guienne had been found in the city. A commission was sent to try the rebels and a company of archers to see that the sentences were carried out. The disturbances had broken out on Saturday, April 23,

1474, amongst certain "folons, vignerons boulangers, et autres gens de mestier," and they had beaten and mutilated the *procureur* of the King, the "honourable and wise maistre Philipes Bouer," and they had also murdered maistre Francoys Lesguillier, who was with the said *procureur* that day. . . . The King desires that the offenders shall be so severely punished that others may take example from it, and that none may be spared. He writes several letters, and sends the barbarous order that the bodies of those who are executed shall be hung at their own doors for the space of a day. . . . "Si le faites ainsi."

With cold-blooded calm severity, he orders later that the guilty shall be seized anywhere, even if they be canons or members of the university; and we can understand how this inexorable temper, which had no respect of persons, made Louis XI hated in a way that the greatest atrocities committed in the hour of passion and excitement, such as Charles was guilty of at Dinant, could never have done. As a matter of fact, we are told that many of the rebels at Bourges were ultimately forgiven.

Month after month had passed away, and spring had succeeded to winter, yet still the gallant defenders of Neuss held out against the repeated attacks of the enemy. But at length the host of the Empire had been roused, and fifteen princes, sixty-five counts, and four thousand nobles of less degree had gathered together their forces near Cologne, amounting to at least forty thousand men. No such assembly of the feudal vassals of the Emperor had been seen for two hundred years, and amongst the most ardent warriors were the Archbishops of Trèves and Mayence and the

Bishop of Munster. A small party of the militia of the free towns had gone forward to give the besieged the good news of their coming, by means of a hollow ball thrown across the river, with the message: "Neuss, be of good comfort; thou art saved." This was about the middle of May, when Charles had just received a message through Earl Rivers that the King of England was prepared to invade France, and awaited his assistance. On the slow approach of the Emperor's army, Charles at once resolved to risk the fortune of battle rather than retire ignominiously before the foe. With some twelve thousand men he made a sudden attack upon the new-comers before they had time to prepare, and with the war cry of "Our Lady, St. George, and Burgundy!" he forced the camp, which was thrown into disorder. Hundreds of the cavalry were cut off and fled towards Cologne, while a great number of men-at-arms were driven into the deep water before the night fell. The next morning the Pope's Legate had arrived to make peace between the Emperor and the Duke, who was quite willing to listen to him, as his only desire was now to join the King of England as soon as possible. A truce was concluded for three days, and we are told that for some hours the gates of Neuss were thrown open, and the besiegers were allowed to enter as peaceful guests and see the city which had so long defied them. The most extraordinary part of the story is that the Burgundians behaved extremely well; they satisfied their curiosity, went to Mass in the church of St. Quirinus, and then quietly returned to their camp without any act of violence.

Frederick III was proud of his position as another

Barbarossa, and in no hurry to submit to terms of peace before having accomplished anything with the vast forces which had taken so long to collect. His vassals were indignant at the idea of disbanding without having chastised the insolence of Burgundy, and the ambassadors of Louis who were then with him, urged that he should not make peace till he had declared all the lordships of Burgundy in the Empire to be forfeited. So Commines says, and he proceeds to relate how the Emperor, "who was never accounted valiant . . . but being old, had seen much," made answer to this suggestion, by reciting the old fable of the hunters who sold the bear skin before killing their bear.

By the middle of June peace was at length made, as both parties were induced to lay down their arms, and the Legate was to decide the original question concerning the archbishopric of Cologne. But before the two armies parted, there was a good deal of desultory fighting between the undisciplined troops and much loss of life. It was on June 27 that Charles broke up his camp, and on his way to meet the King of England, he found time to convene the Three Estates at Bruges, and to give them a good rating for not having supplied him with more money, and for having suffered the French King to ravage the country and take fortresses and towns in Artois and Picardy. They appear to have coldly replied that "war was incompatible with their commerce," and that "they were not bound to defend any province but their own." The Duke parted from his Flemish people in anger, and they were never to meet again. Perhaps the time wasted before Neuss rankled in the mind of Charles and increased his ill-temper. On May 1, the day when the truce with Bur-

gundy was at an end, Louis crossed the Somme with a great army and powerful artillery. Nothing could resist him; and the strong places of Tronquoy, Montdidier, Roye, Corbie, and others were either taken by assault or surrendered at discretion. These were burnt and their fortifications destroyed, but a great number of the inhabitants were suffered to escape to Amiens, where we find them later permitted to carry on their trades. Had Louis continued his victorious invasion, nothing could have stood before him; but he was persuaded by the treacherous advice of St. Pol, to divide his army and move with a portion of it to defend the coast of Normandy in case of an English invasion.

When the ambassadors of Edward IV were sent to the Court of Burgundy to discuss plans of operation, we are told that Charles proudly pointed out to them his splendid artillery, and exclaimed: "Here are the keys of the cities of France." Upon this Le Glorieux, his fool, pretended to search for something on the ground, and his master, always willing to humour him, asked, "What are you looking for?" "I seek the keys of Beauvais," was the reply. As we are aware, the keys of Neuss were also missing. Knowing the strong determined character of Margaret of York, Duchess of Burgundy, we cannot doubt that her influence both on her husband and her brother, the King of England, had much to do with their close alliance against France. She travelled to Calais alone, and was the first to welcome Edward on French soil.

Some interesting letters of Louis XI will carry on the story from his point of view. "June 30, 1475. Croisy-sur-Andelle. Monseigneur le grant maistre;

I came to Normandy, in great haste, as you know, thinking to find the English ready to descend. But I found that the fleet had retired the day before I arrived. . . . When I saw we were doing nothing . . . I sent my people to overrun Picardy in order to destroy the country where they would obtain provisions. . . . And they went as far as the sea, and have burnt all, from the Somme to Hesdin, and from there they came, 'tousjours faisans leur mestier' to Arras!" Then he tells the story of the disastrous sortie from that town when Jacques, the brother of the Count of St. Pol, was taken prisoner, and 1500 men of the garrison were killed. "At Calais there are four or five thousand English, but they do not move, and not one of them has come to show himself to our people. I shall remain here until I know whether the English are going to land in Normandy or not, and I have the men-at-arms of Normandy with me, and I am fortifying Dieppe and filling it with provisions. . . ."

"July 15. Monseigneur le chancelier, je ne vous sauroie que escripre des Anglois, car ilz n'ont fait jusques icy que danser à Saint Omer; et ne sçavons point au vray que le roy d'Angleterre soit descendu; et s'il est descendu c'est à si petite compaignie qu'il n'en est point de bruit, ne les prisonniers qui furent prins hier à Abbeville n'en scevent riens et ne le croyent point. . . ." (I do not know what to write to you about the English, for they have done nothing yet but dance at St. Omer; and we do not know for certain if the King of England has landed, and if he has landed it is with such a small company that there is no rumour, nor do the prisoners who were taken yesterday at Abbeville know anything about it, and

they do not believe it. . . .) It is extraordinary how difficult it was to get news in those days, for in point of fact the King of England had landed at Calais a fortnight before.

The proposal of Edward IV to make war on France had been well received in England, and generous supplies were voted by the Parliament and the clergy, while large sums were also obtained from rich people by the simple plan of *benevolences;* nominally free gifts, but in truth a most oppressive tax. A magnificent army was prepared, and before embarking, Edward sent Garter king-at-arms, to summon Louis to give up the kingdom which was his rightful inheritance. The French King received the herald most courteously, and pointing out that peace would really be much better than war, he gave the messenger three hundred gold pieces and thirty yards of rich crimson velvet, which Commines specially mentions, and adds that the herald expressed the same desire for peace, and promised his services. When once the English army had reached Dover, it took a long time to cross the Channel in the five hundred Dutch boats, flat and low, suitable for the embarkation of horses, which the Duke of Burgundy had sent, besides the King's own fleet. Charles had tried to persuade him to land at the mouth of the Seine, where he might help on one side, while Brittany gave assistance on the other. But Edward felt safer in landing where he was certain of no opposition, in his own city of Calais, where he himself arrived on July 3, 1475. He waited there nine days in company with his sister Margaret before Charles at length made his appearance with only a small escort, not the great army which the English had

been led to expect. He suggested that he himself should invade France by way of Lorraine, when he would proceed to Rheims in order to meet Edward there for his coronation. After assuring the King of England that the Count of St. Pol, who had seized St. Quentin, would give it up to them, and travelling some miles on the way, Charles abruptly departed. This was disconcerting, but worse was to follow, for when the English confidently approached the stronghold of St. Quentin, they were fired upon from the walls.

The Constable of France was playing a very dangerous game, for he had managed to injure and insult the three princes whom he had led into his toils. He had taken St. Quentin from Louis by treachery; he had three times promised to yield it to the Duke of Burgundy, and each time had at the last moment refused to admit his troops; and now he had defied the English. We cannot unravel his tangled policy, which was soon to meet with the fate which it had deserved. That summer was unusually wet and stormy, and in this strange country, laid waste so that there should be no supplies, the English began to murmur at the treachery they had met with and the hardships which they endured. It was this propitious moment which the King of France chose to open negotiations with Edward who, grown stout and luxurious, was already sick of the campaign. Commines tells the story with much detail, for he was called upon to "disguise one of his menial servants with a herald's coat . . . as the King was not so vain as to have either herald or trumpeter in his train." The banner of a trumpeter was made into a herald's tabard, and the King's

messenger was sent to the English camp and brought into the presence of Edward. He said, according to his instructions, that the King of France had always desired to have peace between the two realms, and that the Duke of Burgundy, who had invited him over, had only done so to gratify his own selfish ambition. The herald added that his master knew what great expense this expedition had been, and would propose such terms as would satisfy both the English King and his people. He asked therefore that a safe conduct should be sent for the ambassadors of the King of France that the subject might be discussed. These advances were favourably received; the herald was presented with four nobles, and it was arranged that, with proper safe-conducts, the commissioners of both kingdoms should meet at a little village near Amiens. On the side of the King of France there were the Bastard of Bourbon Admiral of France, the Bishop of Evreux, the Chancellor Doriole, and others; while on the side of England there were the Lord Howard, Thomas St. Leger, William Dudley, and John Morton, Lord Chancellor and Archbishop of Canterbury.

The terms finally agreed upon were that the French should pay 75,000 crowns for the expenses of the war, and a yearly pension of 50,000 crowns, in two instalments, such payment to continue only during the life of either Prince. There is to be a truce of seven years, ending at sunset on August 29, 1482, and the kings of France and England undertake to assist each other against enemies or rebellious subjects. The Dauphin Charles is to marry the Princess Elizabeth, daughter of Edward IV, as soon as they are both of marriageable age, the French King engaging to settle on the

Dauphine an income of 60,000 crowns. Louis also made a special point of the release of Marguerite of Anjou, and agreed to pay for her a ransom of 50,000 crowns. These terms were accepted by Edward IV and his council, many of whom had been largely bribed by Louis, who was willing to part with his money freely, but would not yield any territory. If he could only have peace, he was convinced that the prosperity and activity of his commerce would more than pay back the money. Even before the treaty was signed, he made arrangements about borrowing the large sum required, and "he was able to do this the more easily, as he had always repaid his creditors with an honesty then most rare amongst princes." This is part of the letter he wrote to the Chancellor on August 23, 1475:—

"Monseigneur le chancelier, I send you a copy of the letters which Monseigneur de St. Pierre has written to me, by which you will see the good news which has come to me, for which I praise God and our Lady and Monseigneur St. Martin. And it is necessary that we have all our sum at Amiens before Wednesday evening, and still something more to give to private persons like Monseigneur de Havart and others. . . . And for that I pray you, Monseigneur le chancelier, above all as you love my good, my honour, and that of the kingdom," "faites diligence et ne faillez pas à ce besoing, car si faulte y avoit, vous me feriez ung dommaige irréparable . . ." "let there be no fault, that they may have no cause to make any rupture in that which has been appointed. . . ." After all was settled, we find Louis writing to various cities to announce what he has

done and to ask for subsidies: Harfleur, 400 l. t.; Poitiers, 2000 l. t.; Lyons, 3000 l. t.; Orléans, Bourges, Issoudun, etc.

It was arranged that the two kings were to meet at Pecquigny on the Somme, about three leagues from Amiens. A bridge was thrown across the river with a wooden grating, "rather like a lion's cage," in the middle through which they shook hands. Louis remarked that there was no one in the world he had so much desired to see. Commines, who was very proud of being in the King's company, that day describes Edward as "un très beau prince et grand, mais il commençoit à s'engresser. . . ." (A very handsome big prince, but he was beginning to grow fat. . . .) "They both swore to the treaty, with one hand on a missal and the other on a crucifix, and after this they had some pleasant talk." The English army was entertained with sumptuous and somewhat dangerous hospitality at Amiens, before returning to Calais and embarking once more for England after a bloodless campaign.

Charles of Burgundy was furious when he heard of the proposed truce, and did his utmost to oppose it, but in vain. As for the Constable de St. Pol, he so far forgot himself as to write to Edward that he was "a cowardly, dishonoured, and paltry king," and this insult provoked the King of England to betray the Count's long course of treason to Louis. In fact, St. Pol had betrayed all his allies in turn, and when they combined against him, his case was hopeless. The Duke of Burgundy, to whose protection he fled, betrayed him into the hands of the King of France for the price of a free hand in Lorraine, and the just

sentence of death was passed upon the Constable of France, a man of the highest rank in the kingdom and akin to most of the sovereigns in Europe. "Duquel dictum et sentence il se trouva fort perpleux, car il ne cuidoit pas que le Roy ni sa justice le deussent faire mourir." Thus perished on December 19, 1475, one who had sinned beyond all forgiveness, and the people of Paris rejoiced in the death of the great noble whom they held responsible for many wars, and saw with satisfaction that justice was meted out to the highest in the land as well as the lowest. The wife of St. Pol, Marie of Savoy, the Queen's sister, had died a short time before, and was spared this last sorrow.

Only the very strongest necessity could have driven to this severity Louis, who was usually so ready to forgive his enemies. Of this clemency he gave an example a few days later by setting free from the castle of the Louvre, Jean Duke of Alençon, who had so many times rebelled against him.

CHAPTER XIII

1475-7

TREATY OF SOLEURE BETWEEN FRANCE AND BURGUNDY —CHARLES OF BURGUNDY INVADES THE SWISS TERRITORY—GRANSON SURRENDERS—DEFEAT OF CHARLES—BATTLE OF MORAT, ANOTHER VICTORY FOR THE SWISS —YOLANDE OF SAVOY AND HER FAMILY SEIZED BY COMMAND OF CHARLES—LOUIS XI RESCUES HIS SISTER—SIEGE OF NANCY—DEFEAT AND DEATH OF CHARLES DUKE OF BURGUNDY—POLICY OF LOUIS XI—OCCUPATION OF DUCHY OF BURGUNDY.

ON September 13, 1475, the Treaty of Soleure was signed between Louis XI and Charles of Burgundy, by which all hostilities were to cease for nine years, and France gave up the alliance of the Emperor Frederick, of Sigismund of Austria, and of Cologne, amongst many other conditions concerning various towns and matters of commerce. This left the Duke at liberty to carry out his latest design of annexing Lorraine, and he made a triumphant entrance into Nancy, which he declared he would choose as the capital of his great kingdom and his place of abode. During the time when he was engaged before Neuss and in Picardy, the Swiss had given him much provocation, and his mind was now set upon revenge. The Confederates had invaded Franche-Comté and sacked Pontarlier, they had taken places belonging to

MAXIMILIAN TELLS HIS FATHER (FREDERICK III) THF MESSAGE OF MARIE OF BURGUNDY
By Burgkmair
Woodcut from *Der Weiss-König*

HAWKING
By L. Beck
Woodcut from *Der Weiss-König*

To face p 216

the Prince of Orange in the Jura, and they had sacked and destroyed with the greatest cruelty the towns of Morat and Estavayer. The Count de Romont, Lord of the Pays de Vaud, was urgent in his appeal for help against his enemies, refusing to accept any compensation from them, and Charles was only too eager for the fray. He would listen to no advice; as Commines tells us, Louis tried to persuade him to wait awhile: "le sollicitoit fort qu'il laissast en paix ces pauvres gens de Suisse, et qu'il reposast son armée. . . . A riens ne voulut ledit duc entendre; et jà le conduisoit son malheur" (begged him very much that he would leave the poor Swiss in peace, and that he would rest his army. . . . The said Duke would listen to nothing, and thus he was led to his misfortune). Other writers also assure us that the King did all he could to dissuade Charles from this war, and offered to mediate. He declared that the Swiss were the stoutest fighters in Christendom; had he not found it so at St. Jacques? By the advice of Louis, the Swiss sent deputies to the Duke offering to make any amends in their power and to buy peace at any price, although they were so poor that "the bits of his horses contained more gold than could be found in their mountains."

The Duke of Burgundy left Nancy on January 11, 1476, and on the 23rd arrived at Besançon, where he ratified his treaty with the Emperor, and also gave a definite promise that his daughter Marie, who was now nineteen, should become the wife of Maximilian. Continuing his journey, he crossed the Jura early in February, in bad weather, and during four days remained at the summit of the pass while his great army, the

strong artillery and numerous wagons containing sumptuous treasures, slowly crept over the snowy ridge. On the 12th, he reached Orbe and took up his abode in the castle. On hearing of his coming, the men of Bern sent urgent messages in every direction to summon their neighbours and allies to their help, but at first there was but little response, until a few days later the news arrived that Granson was besieged. The five hundred men in the garrison all belonged to the Canton and most of them to the town itself, and now indeed the frantic appeal, ending with "Quick! Quick! Come! Come!" met with such a gallant arming and hurrying forth, that it was plain the spirit of the people was roused at last.

Granson lies close to the lake of Neuchatel, at the foot of the gently sloping base of the mountains, pathless, wooded, and with deep ravines. The town was taken by assault on the 21st, but the garrison retreated into the castle, which was strongly fortified, although there had not been time to provision it. The fire of the besiegers was incessant and destructive; soon the defences of the gates were shot away; the main tower and the bulwarks were in ruins, while most terrible to them of all, the unfortunate besieged saw four vessels, coming to rescue them by water, driven back by the fire of the enemy. All hope was now at an end for them, and the garrison surrendered under a promise that their lives would be spared, but, apparently in a fit of fury, Charles gave orders that they should all be hung at once, on that fatal Ash Wednesday.

For this cruel massacre swift retribution was at hand. Two days later the men of Bern and their allies reached the northern shores of the lake in great force,

consisting of picked men from the various Cantons full of a fierce desire for vengeance, with "Granson!" as their battle-cry. As they came over the ridge above Vaumarcus, they were surprised to find apparently the whole Burgundian army spread out before them and advancing towards the pass. Had Charles expected a direct attack from his foes he would probably have remained in his fortified camp, but he believed they would only obstruct his way to Neuchatel. His plan now was to draw the Swiss down into the plain, where he might surround and overwhelm them with his cavalry. This backward movement, which occurred after some vigorous fighting, was mistaken by the Confederates for a retreat, and as they advanced in pursuit, it so chanced that a great body of their allies suddenly emerged from the gorge with the sun shining full on their banners and glittering lances. Seeing the mêlée below, they raised a mighty shout and rushed forward, whereupon the army of Burgundy in sudden panic, thought the day was lost, and in a few minutes the greater part was in full flight. In vain Charles and his nobles dashed into the retiring squadrons and strove to arrest them; all that could now be done was to cover the retreat and by successive charges save his host from destruction, and not until the camp was entirely deserted was he at length drawn away by some faithful companions, almost by force, when his life was in deadly peril.

There was no very great loss of life, as the army of Burgundy was saved by its rapid flight; but never was anything seen like the marvellous spoil left behind in the camp. Besides the artillery, the stores, the tents, the richly-painted banners, there were all the

costly treasures which the dukes of Burgundy had accumulated; gorgeous tapestries, hundredweights of gold and silver plate, the sword of state whose hilt was studded with precious stones, three of the greatest historical diamonds in the world, a profusion of other precious stones, robes of silk, satin, and cloth of gold, an immense amount of silver coins, and more riches than we can even enumerate. Duke Charles had doubtless looked forward to dazzling the courts of Italy with his magnificence, which now fell into the hands of the Cantons and is carefully recorded in their archives. But the greatest loss of all to Charles was the "fame of his arms and the terror of his name."

During this time, Louis was at Lyons in order to have the earliest intelligence from the seat of war. It was a most critical time for him as Commines says: "The Duke of Milan was the ally of Charles of Burgundy; he disposed of the House of Savoy as if it were his own; the King René of Sicily wished to place the land of Provence in his hands. . . . At this time there came to the King the captain of the Italian mercenaries, one Campo Basso, who offered to poison his master the Duke Charles, or deliver him into the hands of the King. . . ." Louis would not listen to this treachery, but at once sent word of it to the Duke who refused to believe it. "Parquoy vous voyez que Dieu lui troubla le sens en cet endroit." "Quos Deus vult perdere prius dementat" is the constant refrain of this shrewd observer, who, although a faithful servant of Louis, always speaks with affection of his first patron. After the defeat of Charles at Granson, most of his allies forsook him and tried to make their peace with

the King of France. René of Anjou came to meet him at Lyons and was most kindly received; a treaty was signed between them by which Louis restored to him the revenues of Anjou; after Charles of Maine, René of Vaudemont was to be his successor, but Provence was to return to the Crown failing direct heirs. The King's uncle had every reason to be grateful to him, as it was to his generosity that he owed the ransom of his daughter Marguerite, who had been restored to her father a few months before and had taken up her abode with him in the beautiful castle of Reculée, near Angers. With his passionate love of art and literature, René would find much to interest him in the splendid churches of the city, which Louis had filled with rare treasures, with the rich brocades and tapestries made by his command; and above all in the new printing press founded by the King's liberality in 1473, with its wonderful productions. The *Légende Dorée*, in folio, with the *Lives of the Saints*, was at that very time being brought out. When the old Prince departed, he was laden with rich presents, jewels, rare manuscripts, and other treasures to add to his fine collection.

Charles of Burgundy had fallen ill with grief and disappointment, but he had set his heart upon revenge, and nothing would turn him from his purpose. With infinite labour and expense, he had raised before the end of May a more powerful army than that which took to flight at Granson, and full of reckless confidence he advanced from Lausanne against his arch-enemy Bern by way of Morat. All Europe was prepared to watch with breathless interest the great drama on the point of beginning, and on which so much

depended. The Emperor was full of hope, the King of Hungary of fear, whatever might chance. Edward IV had sent his brother-in-law Rivers to be on the spot; Yolande of Savoy, at Gex, had constant prayers and processions; while the Duke of Milan kept relays of couriers from his palace to the Burgundian camp; and Louis XI, the most interested of all, awaited the event at Lyons.

The town of Morat is situated upon the eastern bank of the lake of that name, about two leagues to the south-east of the lake of Neuchatel, at a point where four roads converge, two skirting the marshy banks of the lake, and the others leading across the densely-wooded hills to the bed of the Saane, in different directions. Morat was besieged on June 8, and three days later an attempt to take it by assault was repelled with great loss. Moreover the town, still accessible from the lake, was constantly receiving fresh munitions and reinforcements, and the garrison fought with splendid courage and endurance. As on the previous occasion, Bern found it at first difficult to rouse the Confederates, but once alive to the danger of Morat, there was a splendid mustering from all the cities of the League, and on the evening of the 19th almost all the expected levies had arrived close at hand at Ulmitz—more than thirty thousand picked men, amongst them the gallant young René of Lorraine with a small company of mercenaries. The men of Zurich were the last to arrive, after truly heroic efforts. They had struggled into Bern in less than three days of incessant marching, utterly exhausted; but when they learnt how urgent was the need, they set forth again at midnight in darkness and storm, many dropping by the way ere

the bridge at Gümmingen was crossed. They entered the camp through a lane of spears, amid shouts of welcome from the comrades who had waited for them, at their earnest entreaty.

The delay they had caused proved, in fact, one cause of success. Saturday, June the 22nd, was the anniversary of the battle of Laupen, won in 1399, and the Swiss attack being expected on this day, the troops of Burgundy had been drawn up at dawn in battle order, in the place selected by their leader. But after six hours of drenching rain, as no enemy appeared, they dispersed to their quarters, laid aside their arms, and devoted themselves to rest and refreshment. It was then, at noon, that the Swiss army suddenly broke out from the forest and advanced with the steady impetuous courage which no enemy could resist. The artillery of Burgundy swept down the cavalry until their guns were taken, but the infantry pressed on towards the camp, and against the serried ranks of spears the squadrons dashed themselves in vain. The rout, commencing on the right wing, soon became general, for when Charles gave the order to fall back that he might reform his troops on more favourable ground, all concerted resistance was at an end. Yet the struggle was long and terrible before the army of Burgundy was swept from the field; it is believed that two-thirds of that splendid army fell in battle, were massacred in the pursuit for no prisoners were taken, or drowned in the waters of the lake. The fighting lasted till the close of the long summer day, when the conquerors returned to the camp to share the spoil, but this time they found little booty beyond a great stock of provisions, banners, arms, and artillery.

News of the battle reached Yolande Duchess of Savoy at Gex early on the Sunday morning, and it was confirmed before night by the arrival of the Duke of Burgundy with a small escort of less than a hundred horse. He tried to persuade her to accompany him to Franche-Comté with her children, and on her refusal he gave secret orders to his chamberlain to seize the whole royal family of Savoy on their way to Geneva. Olivier de la Marche unwillingly obeyed, but failed in an important point, as the eldest son, Duke Philibert, escaped through the presence of mind of his governor. This most unchivalrous and ungrateful deed was therefore a failure.

This was the letter of congratulation which Louis XI wrote, July 16, 1476, to the "Avoyers" and counsellors of the city of Bern. "Erlachtesten herren, ouch aller furliebsten fründ, and durch Gots gnad aller unuberwindlichesten. Illustrious lords and very special friends, by the grace of God most invincible, we have learnt by your letters . . . that the Duke of Burgundy, our common enemy, has criminally invaded your country with intention and will to destroy the country entirely. . . . Seeing which God in His mercy has prevented and has given you the victory and triumph in ordered battle, on the above . . . and has delivered into your hands his train with all his munitions of war, which to us has been a great comfort as a thing expected and ardently desired . . . and to obtain at length a most happy peace, with the assistance of Him Who procures eternal peace, and may the same deliver you from your enemies and protect you by His goodness, for the continual increase of your name and your lordship. . . ."

When Louis heard that his sister Yolande had been imprisoned by the Duke of Burgundy he was much disturbed, and immediately took steps to keep order in Savoy, and also to procure the freedom of the Duchess and her family from the château of Rouvres, where she was confined. When she came to him at Tours, he received her with the utmost affection, only saluting her with: "Soyez la bienvenue, Madame la Bourguignonne." "Elle connut bien a sa visage qu'il ne se faisoit que jouer; et repondit bien sagement qu'elle estoit bonne Françoise, et preste d'obeyr au roy, en ce qu'il luy plairoit luy commander." Commines goes on to say that the King "ordered him to supply her money while she was at the Court and for her journey home, and to provide her with silken stuffs. When she took leave of the King he saw to her safe escort home, and gave her back her children, and all her places and her rings and everything that belonged to her. They were both glad to part, and have remained since good brother and sister until death."

Before the Duchess left, a deputation arrived from the Swiss League, who were splendidly received and loaded with presents, and Adrian of Bubemberg their president, was honoured with the collar of St. Michael. An embassy also arrived from the Duke of Brittany for the execution of a fresh treaty, of the kind which he had so often made and broken before.

After his defeat at Morat, the Duke of Burgundy retreated to the castle of La Rivière, near Pontarlier, where he spent nearly two months, a prey to gloomy despair. Bad news reached him from every side, but when he heard that René had collected an army and with the help of Alsace was invading Lorraine,

his savage rage knew no bounds, and he set himself to the difficult task of collecting an army. He found it necessary to promise double pay in order to keep his own men, and he could not induce the burghers of Flanders to listen to his mandates and invectives, and advance him the large sums of money he demanded. Meantime René of Lorraine was making good progress, for many of the towns submitted to him at once as their rightful lord, and others were taken after slight resistance. At last the gallant young Prince arrived before Nancy, which was bravely defended at first by its Burgundian garrison and a company of English archers, but when the provisions began to fail and there seemed no hope of relief, the soldiers insisted upon a capitulation, which was readily granted on the most honourable terms. When the Governor, the Lord of Bièvres, son of Jacqueline de Croy, rode out from the city gate, René bowed the knee before his cousin and thanked him for having so well governed his duchy.

Charles was at that very time advancing to the rescue of Nancy, and he reached Toul on October 2nd, to hear that the beleaguered city had fallen three days before. René's army was not numerous enough for a pitched battle, and he therefore left a strong garrison in his capital, and finding that the city was now provisioned for two months, he promised to return within that time bringing fresh levies, or give up the struggle. His only hope was now in the Swiss League, and he hastened to Basel, where he appealed to the assembly of deputies. But he had much opposition to contend with, for the Pope, the Emperor, and the King of Hungary were alarmed at the dangerous position of

Charles, and were doing their utmost to make peace. However, with the help of large advances of money from the King of France, René was able to enlist a paid army of mercenaries from the Cantons, and at length, after Mass on Christmas Day, the young Duke set forth with an army which had reached the number of twenty thousand by the time when he arrived before the walls of Nancy. It was some weeks since the two months had expired, and the besieged were reduced to the last extremity by famine and the terrible severity of the winter, from which, however, the army of Burgundy outside the walls had suffered most.

This was the moment which Campo Basso chose for his treacherous desertion of the Duke of Burgundy, but when he attempted to join the enemy, the Swiss refused to fight with a traitor. In vain the faithful vassals of Charles endeavoured to persuade him to avoid an engagement in the weakened condition of his army and to withdraw while there was yet time. But the unconquered spirit of the Duke was that of a lion at bay, and he fiercely put aside all such counsel; he had resolved to go forth and meet the enemy, not await their coming.

On the "Vigil of the Kings," Sunday, January 5, 1477, the réveillé sounded before daybreak, and under cover of darkness, the Burgundian army was led a "short half-league" to the south-east where the road to St. Nicolas enters a forest, near a little rivulet flowing into the Meurthe. Here Charles placed his artillery in front on a mound commanding the road by which the foe must come, and behind it the archers and pikemen drawn up in a square, like those of the Swiss, while the wings on each side were composed of cavalry.

As he fastened his helmet, we are told that the golden lion of Flanders on the crest fell to the ground, but he would not have it replaced. "Hoc est signum Dei," he said. While the morning wore away a heavy snowstorm came on, but it passed at noon, and as the sun burst through the clouds, the troops of René, whose scouts had brought news of the manœuvre, came down the wooded hill from an unlooked-for quarter, and of a sudden the two hostile armies were face to face. Although the gunners were unable to turn their pieces, yet there was time for Charles to bring forward his archers, and the attacking force suffered severely, for their weapons caught in the brambles and they had difficulty in making their way out. But before long the attack was general, and the overwhelming number and magnificent valour of the Swiss levies had soon decided the fate of the battle.

Ever in the thick of the fight, leading, encouraging, charging with desperate courage, the image of the mighty Duke on his black horse long remained the ideal of a splendid warrior, alike for friend and foe. Almost the last to leave that fatal field, he was borne onward by the flying host, with a little band of chivalrous nobles closing in around him. How he fell is still shrouded in mystery, although many traditions have gathered round his end, in that fearful scene of bloodshed and destruction from whence but few escaped of the routed host. It is said that two days later his body, stripped of his splendid armour and scarcely to be recognized, was found embedded in the mud on the banks of the frozen stream, and buried with all reverence by René, the young conqueror.

So surpassing had been the fame of Charles of

Burgundy, so dazzling the glamour which clung to his personality, that we are told it was long before his subjects really believed in his death. A fall so great and sudden could not be possible; their Duke was but biding his time, and would come again to shine forth in greatness and glory.

With regard to the character of Charles, the estimate given by Freeman is very suggestive. "The novels of Scott have led people to see nothing but an embodiment of brute force in a man whose very mixed character is a really instructive study of human nature. It would be an abuse of words to call Charles either a great man or a good man; but there were in his character strong elements both of greatness and goodness." He speaks of the Duke's inflexible will, his stern and unbending justice, combined with utter indifference to human suffering. Of this, notable instances were seen at Dinant and Liége, and we cannot acquit him, on various occasions, of the treachery which is not usually associated with outspoken violence. Yet, as Commines says, "To speak truth, he was endowed with many good qualities," and as we read the tragedy of his downfall, all our sympathy is with him.

There is a curious letter written by Louis at Plessis-du-Parc, on January 9, 1477. He had not yet heard of the death of the Duke of Burgundy, but knew that a battle had been fought. "To the Counsellors and inhabitants of Dijon. De par le roy. Chiers et bien amez, nous avons sçeu l'inconvenient advenu à beaul frère de Bourgoingne, dont nous desplaist." (We have heard of the *inconvenience* which has befallen our fair brother of Burgundy, at which we are troubled.) "And if it were so that his person were taken or

dead, which God forbid, you know that . . . his daughter is our near relation and god-daughter, whose rights we would keep in such a way as our own, . . . and we advise you that you place yourselves in no other hands than ours, and we will maintain the rights of our said god-daughter. . . ." The King also wrote on the same day to the Lord of Craon to take possession of the duchy and county of Burgundy if he should hear of the Duke's death. This was justifiable with regard to the duchy, which was a male fief but returned to the Crown as there was no male heir, and Louis had no right to the county of Burgundy (Franche-Comté), and as for his suggestion of the Dauphin as the husband of Marie of Burgundy, this would certainly cause a war with Edward IV, whose little daughter was already called the "Dauphine."

On receiving certain news of the death of Charles, the King of France wrote to the different towns in the duchy of Burgundy, pointing out that it had reverted to the Crown by the conditions under which it was given by Jean II le Bon to his son Philip in 1363. He had the support of the Prince of Orange and the Bishop of Langres, who induced the burghers to accept quietly the French occupation. In the north, the towns of the Somme were French at heart, and soon opened their gates to Louis, some by means of a golden key. By the Treaty of Péronne, their return by purchase had been stipulated for. Commines and the Admiral of Bourbon were well received, both at Abbeville and St. Quentin, and also won over Philip de Crevecœur the Governor of Arras, while the lands of Ponthieu, Santerre, and Vermandois made no resistance when the King himself reached them. As for the

heiress of Duke Charles, she had sent a protest to the town of Dijon against the occupation of the duchy by France, but she could make no armed resistance, for she was detained by the burghers of Ghent, who rejoiced in their freedom from the stern rule of Charles, and resolved to make the most of their opportunity.

Were not the last moments of the headstrong Charles the Rash troubled by thoughts of the young daughter whom he left powerless to protect her vast inheritance? For in truth this was the immediate result of his overthrow. The much-desired Marie of Burgundy, the cynosure of all Europe, to whose hand her father had suffered so many princes to aspire, now found herself a defenceless girl in the midst of grasping and exultant foes.

CHAPTER XIV

1477–81

Assassination of Galeazzo Duke of Milan—Louis invades Franche-Comté—Troubles in the Netherlands—The Men of Ghent put to Death the Ministers of Marie of Burgundy—Revolt of Arras cruelly repressed—Picardy laid waste—Marriage of Maximilian of Austria and Marie of Burgundy—Truce with France—Failing health of Louis XI.

The tidings of another disaster reached the King of France at about the same time as that of the battle of Nancy. On the morrow of Christmas Day, Galeazzo Sforzo, Duke of Milan, was assassinated at the doors of the church of San Stefano. The tragic story is well known—how his wife Bona had a presentiment of evil and prayed him to remain at home, and how the Duke was struck down by a courtier he had wronged, as he entered the great doorway while the choir sang "Sic transit gloria mundi." It so chanced that his two brothers, Lodovico and Sforza, Duke of Bari, were at that moment the guests of Louis XI, as, weary of inaction, they had been travelling in France, and after visiting Angers and Paris they had come to spend Christmas at Tours, although the Duke of Milan, so long the friend of France, had joined the side of Burgundy. On January 9, Louis wrote to inform the people of Poitiers of this event, as it

appears to have been his friendly custom to share any important news at once with his faithful subjects.

"Chers et bien amez, nous avons sceu puis aucuns jours la detestable et cruelle mort de . . . feu nostre beau frère le duc de Milan, à qui Dieu pardoint . . ." Then he gives particulars of the "cruel and execrable deed . . . the inhuman crime. . . ."

Yet after expressing all this reprobation, Louis gives an instance of his curious cold detachment of mind by writing three days later to Poitiers, ordering festal processions to celebrate the death of his enemies the Duke of Milan and the Duke of Burgundy. He will openly rejoice over the downfall of his foes in the spirit of the ancient Israelites, after having clearly expressed his detestation of any crimes by which it was accomplished. In subsequent letters we find that Louis proved himself a good friend to the widowed Bona, Duchess of Milan, who was to suffer so much from her brother-in-law Lodovico, and who was always "dame de petit sens." It was at this time that Louis of Orleans, afterwards Louis XII, now a boy of fourteen, tried to persuade the King to uphold his rights to Milan, inherited from his grandmother Valentine Visconti, and this early ambition should have proved a warning to Louis XI.

We find in other letters of this period, the extreme care which he gives to the order and discipline of his army, and he made his treasurers swear to pay the men punctually, to pay in money, never in kind . . . and to watch over the interests of the inhabitants of garrisoned towns. While Louis was at Péronne he gave audience to an embassy from the Duke of Brittany, who wished to be reassured that the Treaty of Senlis

held good. He also received the deputies sent by Marie of Burgundy, the leaders being two faithful ministers of Duke Charles, both of French birth: the Chancellor Hugenot and the Lord of Humbercourt. They brought a letter signed by the young Duchess in which she very unwisely announced that these two lords, with Margaret of York and Adolphe of Clèves, were her four chosen advisers, by whose counsel she would be guided. Now the estates of Flanders, and other representatives of the *vier landen*, had recently met at Ghent early in February, 1477, and had compelled Marie to sign the "Groote Privilegie," which revoked all the encroachments of Charles upon their privileges, and gave them extraordinary powers of self-government. She appears also to have promised to do nothing without their advice, and to dismiss the two French lords from her council.

But when Louis was at the *cité* of Arras, of which he took possession on March 5, he received another embassy, this time from the men of Ghent, and being in doubt of their authority to treat with him, he showed them the previous letter of Marie, which he had not been asked to keep secret. The civic deputies returned to Ghent full of their discovery, to find that the storm had already broken out, and that the town was furious at the suspicion that Hugenot was persuading their Duchess to escape to France. Their news about the letter may have been the last straw, for Hugenot and Humbercourt, who had been arrested on March 4, were tried three weeks later by a commission of only eight nobles and a number of burghers, and found guilty. In vain Marie appeared before the judges and made a touching appeal for her friends, and when they

were condemned, hurried alone into the market-place, and with tears besought that they might be spared. But nothing could soften the vindictive obstinacy of the citizens, and after being tortured to extract a confession, these two noble and faithful servants of the House of Burgundy were put to death on April 3. The Dowager Duchess Margaret of York and the Sire of Ravestein had made their escape, for several other well-known supporters of Burgundy were executed, and Marie herself, now deprived of her friends, was closely watched and kept in a kind of honourable imprisonment.

Louis XI had kept Easter at Thérouanne and then moved on to Hesdin, which he took, permitting the garrison to march out with all the honours of war. From Hesdin he wrote to the Count of Boulogne that he had taken Boulogne, and as it was such an important place and so difficult to defend, he would not hand it over to him, but would give him the county of Lauraguais instead as an indemnity. Soon after this, Arras revolted with the help of some Burgundians, who threw themselves into the town. They insulted the French garrison, hurled defiance at the King in satirical rhymes, and succeeded in wounding him when he appeared in person before the walls to watch the effect of his new artillery. He thus writes on the subject: "Au regard de ma blessure, ç'a esté le duc de Bretaigne qui le m'a fait faire, pour ce qui me appelloit *le roy couart* . . ." (the coward king). Louis probably meant that this taunt of the Duke of Brittany caused him to expose himself rashly. The whole story of the treatment of Arras by Louis XI remains so serious a blot upon his reign that it must be given

with full details. When the seditious party in the town rebelled against the French occupation, they appear to have sent a deputation to Marie of Burgundy, obtaining a safe conduct by some pretext; while at the same time a large body of Flemish troops advanced to the help of the revolted citizens. Looking upon this as a piece of concerted treachery, Louis ordered the deputies to be overtaken and brought back to Hesdin, where they were tried and condemned to death by the Provost-Marshal. Half the number were beheaded. The King thus relates the story: "Ceux dudit Arras s'estoient assemblez bien vingt deux ou vingt trois pour aller en ambassade devers mademoiselle de Bourgoigne. Ilz ont esté prins et les instructions qu'ilz portoient, et ont eu les testes trenchées car ils m'avoient fait une fois serment. Il y en avoit un entre les autres, maistre Oudart de Bussy, à qui j'avois donné une seigneurie au parlement; et enfin qu'on congneust bien sa teste, je l'ai faicte atourner d'ung beau chaperon fourré, et est sus le marché d'Hesdin là où il préside." (Those of Arras had assembled, twenty-two or twenty-three to go on an embassy to Mademoiselle of Burgundy. They have been taken with the instructions they bore, and have been beheaded, for they had sworn an oath to me. There was amongst the others, one M. Oudart de Bussy, whom I had made a councillor of the Parlement; and in order that his head might be recognized I caused it to be adorned with a handsome fur-cap, and it is above the market-place of Hesdin where he presides.) This grim jest, the only one of the kind which we find in the whole of the King's immense correspondence, reminds us of the brutal custom of the

day, and especially of the Duke of York's head with a paper crown, placed on the walls of York by Marguerite of Anjou a few years earlier. But if Louis thought to rule the turbulent citizens by the terror of these executions, he was woefully mistaken, for they continued their course of conspiracy and sedition, until at length, in 1479, he was so incensed against them that he actually tried the desperate remedy of expelling the inhabitants of Arras, destroying its fortifications, repeopling it with settlers from other towns, and changing its name to "Franchise." But this was beyond the power of even an absolute King; the strangers were slow to come, and the citizens returned to their deserted homes after the Peace of Arras (1482), while *Arras* it remains to this day.

We cannot exonerate Louis for this terrible act of despotism, although it may have fallen far short of the massacre of the whole population of Dinant, Liége, and Nesle by the Duke of Burgundy. Louis may have hoped to insure the peace in other cities by so severe an example, but as all such universal punishment is necessarily unjust, he committed a crime which no treachery or rebellion can excuse.

Returning to the campaign in Picardy of the spring of 1477, we find Louis writing to Dammartin on May 7. "I have taken Arras. . . . I will join you with a good company." From this date we can trace the whole course of the King's conquests in Artois from the headings of his many letters. St. Omer was the only place which held out, for Tournay, which paid a yearly sum to remain neutral, was persuaded by Olivier le Daim to receive a French garrison at the very moment when it was threatened by Burgundy.

The King arrived before Cambray, a free city very strongly fortified, owing homage to the Empire. The inhabitants remembered that they had once belonged to France and opened their gates to Louis and his suite, replacing the Imperial eagle on their standard by the royal lilies. But when a truce was concluded later, the King humorously suggested that the mayor had better put his bird up again some fine night and say that it had come back with the swallows. He retained still his jurisdiction as Viscount of Cambray. At the siege of Bouchain, towards the end of May, 1477, Tanneguy du Châtel, the devoted servant of both Charles VII and his son, was fatally wounded by the King's side, to his great sorrow. He caused the brave soldiers to be buried at Nôtre Dame de Cléry, by the side of the tomb prepared for himself. When Bouchain had fallen, Le Quesnoy was next taken, and here Raoul de Lannoy distinguished himself so greatly that the King said to him: "You are too fierce in battle, my friend, you need a chain"; and then gave him the collar of St. Michael which he was wearing. When Louis arrived before Avesnes, the town had arranged to surrender, but the inhabitants revolted, tore up the royal letter without reading it, and fired on the messengers. As a punishment, the place was destroyed by fire and sword; a most regrettable incident, but in strict accordance with the customs of war, which was not carried on in those days with rose-water methods.

Valenciennes and other towns of Hainault still held out, and it is very painful to read of villages burnt and the country laid waste. In a letter written on June 25th at St. Quentin, we find Louis writing to Dammartin: "Je vous envoye troys ou quatre mille

faucheurs pour faire le gast que vous savez. Je vous prye, mettez les en besongne, et ne plaignez pas cinq ou six pippes de vin à les faire bien boyre et à les enyvrer. . . ." (I send you three or four thousand mowers to do the "wasting" that you know of. I pray you, set them to work, and do not grudge five or six pipes of wine to make them drink well and intoxicate them. . . .") This was to mow down the growing crops. Another letter adds: "Show that you have seen this done before, by Salisbury, Talbot, Escalles, and all those people." It is quite true that such destruction was the universal custom, but nothing can excuse such conduct.

On July 2nd, Louis writes to send war news to the people of Abbeville, Rheims, and other towns. "Last Friday, the Duke of Guelders came with 10,000 or 12,000 Flemings to set fire to the suburbs of Tournay . . . and they were driven out . . . and the said Duke of Guelders was struck down and carried dead into the said town of Tournay. . . . and two days after in the battle 'Dieu merci, Nostre Dame et Monseigneur St. Martin,' there remained on the field 7000 to 8000 Flemings, 800 to 1000 prisoners, 800 chariots with artillery, etc. . . ."

This was Adolphus Duke of Guelders who had behaved so cruelly to his father, and who was the husband chosen by the men of Ghent for their young Duchess. But after his death, they were willing to allow Marie to carry out her father's last intention and marry according to her own choice, the gallant, handsome, young Maximilian, son of the Emperor, who was now a desirable ally for the Flemish towns, against France. This wedding, which was to have so im-

portant an influence on the future history of Europe, actually took place at Ghent on August 18th, 1477. The whole picturesque and most interesting story has been so fully told elsewhere, that I will not repeat it here.[1] A temporary truce was concluded early in September, between Maximilian of Austria and the King of France, which might end at any time with four days' notice.

The close alliance between Burgundy and the Empire was a great blow to the policy of Louis, who had other troubles at home during this year. Jean II, Prince of Orange, his trusted general, forsook him to join the side of Maximilian, and persuaded many towns to revolt. Then at last the King could no longer remain blind to the repeated treachery of his early friend Jacques Duke of Nemours, whom he had rewarded with his title and great estates, and had spared and forgiven again and again. He was condemned to death by a solemn and impartial tribunal and executed on August 4th, 1477. But he left a Parthian shot behind, for in his confession he had implicated almost all the princes of the blood and the great nobles including Dammartin, and from that time Louis felt himself to be in such an atmosphere of perfidy and ingratitude that he was always a prey to suspicion. Brantôme says that "his grandmother told him" the children of Nemours were placed under the scaffold, but no serious historian has believed this horrible calumny.

Louis felt that his truce with Burgundy could not last long, and we find in his letters that he is having new and improved cannon made, and is also in close alliance with the Swiss League, from whom he receives

[1] *Marguerite of Austria*, by Christopher Hare, p. 12.

MARIE OF BURGUNDY, WIFE OF MAXIMILIAN

From an old engraving by SUYDERHOEF

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a large force of mercenaries. The Duke of Brittany was betrayed by a secretary, who told Louis that he was conspiring with England; and when the King accused him of this treachery, Duke François made humble submission and swore on the true cross to be faithful henceforth. He had no choice, for his nobles were against him, and Louis had a strong army on the frontier ready to invade his province, as there was at that moment peace with Maximilian. As for Edward IV, he had no wish for war with Louis who paid him so well, and who, by keeping most of the English ministers in his pay, was sure of their support. When Edward repeated to him the complaints of Margaret his sister, Duchess Dowager of Burgundy, Louis replied at once that he would give the Duchess every compensation for injury done to her towns. The truce with England, which had been made for seven years, was now prolonged until the death of either King. There is a curious correspondence between the King of France and the Emperor, who cannot help his son with money or men, but writes to remonstrate with his enemy. Louis replies in Latin letters of many pages, in which he points out that this quarrel of Maximilian has nothing to do with the Empire; that it was by no fault of his that the lilies of France replaced the Imperial eagle at Cambray; that he is amazed that at this critical moment for Christianity, threatened by the Turks, the Emperor should encourage war, etc. etc. . . .

Louis always kept up great interest in the affairs of Italy. He wrote friendly letters to the Doge of Venice, who saw in him an ally against the exactions of Sixtus IV and the ambition of Naples. The men of

Florence were always the firm allies of Louis, and when on April 26, 1478, Giuliano dei Medici was murdered by the Pazzi in the church of the Reparata, the King not only wrote to express his indignation and grief in the strongest terms, but he sent Commines on a special embassy to Lorenzo. When the Pope joined with Naples to invade the territory of Florence, Louis assembled a great meeting of clergy at Orleans, where it was declared that a General Council must be summoned to heal the abuses of the Church. This was the last thing which Sixtus desired, and he was compelled to allow the kings of France and England to arbitrate between him and the Republic, which was thus effectually protected. There are a number of most interesting letters to the Pope, Milan, Ferrara, Naples, all with the one refrain, "Peace, peace!"

The Prince of Orange, who was now his bitter enemy, had tried to poison him, and Louis alludes to "le prince de Trente Deniers qui nous a voulu empoisonner . . ." (comparing Orange to Judas, with his thirty pieces of silver).

In Spain the diplomacy of Louis was as successful as in Italy, for he concluded a solemn treaty with Ferdinand and Isabel on October 9, 1478, and was thus at liberty to devote all his energies to the coming contest with Maximilian, who broke the truce by taking Cambray. Soon after this, Dôle was taken by the French and razed to the ground, and the rest of the province was not long in submitting. The free city of Besançon acknowledged the King as suzerain, and was rewarded by many privileges. The University of Dôle was re-established there. Unfortunately Dammartin, no longer having the King's full con-

fidence, had been succeeded in command of the army in the north by Philip de Crévecœur, who had less experience and caution. Maximilian had advanced to besiege Thérouanne and met the French army about a league south of the city at Guinegaste, August 7, 1479. Crévecœur, trusting to his cavalry, charged the enemy's horse, who were few in comparison and broke before the vehemence of his onrush. Forgetting all else, the French general pursued the flying horsemen, and meanwhile his "francs-archers" attacked the Flemish pikemen, who were splendidly led by Maximilian, and made a steady resistance. The French garrison of Thérouanne sallied forth to help, but passing the Flemish camp on their way, they stayed to plunder it, and to massacre the helpless camp followers they found in it. In this it is said that the "francs-archers" joined, and this want of discipline lost them the hope of victory, for they were pursued and cut down by the Flemings. When Crévecœur and his men-at-arms returned from the wild pursuit, it was to find their infantry scattered, and all they could do was to endeavour to cover their retreat, leaving Maximilian in possession.

The battle had lasted for six hours, seven thousand men are said to have been left on the field, and, as Sismondi remarks, this battle was "like that of Montl'héry indecisive and useless to the apparent victor." They were the only two battles of importance in the reign of Louis XI, and both were fought against the King's wish. After this the system of free archers came to an end, as a new body of heavy-armed infantry was raised to take their place, and each town had to contribute money instead of men. This was a source of

great discontent, for the people only saw a new and heavy tax in the carefully considered scheme by which the King hoped to improve the defence of the realm. He met with the usual fate of all reformers—misunderstanding and even hatred. This burden was all the heavier as at the time the health of Louis, who had never been strong, began to fail visibly. When Commines came back from his year of absence in Italy as ambassador, he noticed with sorrow that he "found the King our master somewhat aged and inclined to be sickly." In a letter of Louis in June, 1479, to the Bishop of Albi, whom he humorously calls "le plus vaillans que fut oncques l'évesque Turpin," he mentions that he was travelling to Dijon with his niece Louise of Savoy, daughter of his sister Yolande, whose marriage he was arranging, when he was taken ill with the heat. After this we constantly find in his letters allusions to his health, a desire to avoid the great heats, inquiries about the *mortalités* of various places, messengers sent in advance to Dijon and elsewhere to find out if there is an epidemic in the town, and to Auxerre to ask "s'il fait bon et sein dans ladicte ville et si la mortalité a cessée."

The King still continues his incessant journeys all over his kingdom, but he has become more careful; he asks frequently for prayers for his health, and he sends urgent orders for "graines de genièvre rouges" (red juniper seeds) to be sent to him.

But his mental vigour is as great as ever, and we find him taking the keenest interest in every minute detail of the administration of justice, sending clear and positive instructions to his governors and generals, and working for the good of his kingdom with an energy which

would wear out a younger man. In his anxiety not to betray the state of his health to foreign princes, Louis shows more eagerness than ever in sending for harriers of some famous breed from Flanders, from Brittany or Spain, he preferred them "de poil roux," but he had also some white dogs; horses from Naples, a splendid mule from Sicily, and small ponies from Barbary, and for all these he would pay any price "for his hunting," although this delight of his earlier life was now a great effort to him. He had taken deep interest in his fleet which was now in command of an experienced admiral, who met with much success on the coast, and in 1480 captured, on its way to Holland, the whole of the herring fleet which supplied all Europe with salt fish.

While his own health was becoming precarious, the King felt great anxiety about the Dauphin Charles who had always been a delicate child, and who remained at Amboise under the care of his mother. He requires constant news of the boy, who in 1480 had several attacks of fever and a violent cough, and he shows the most anxious affection. Thus he writes: ". . . Do not take Monsieur le Daulphin out in the fields till February, and send me word to-morrow morning how he is to-night, for having been out in the fields. . . ." And again: "If Monsieur le Daulphin is in good health bring him to see me . . . and pay great attention to him. . . ." If Charles has a cough, there are the most minute inquiries as to how he caught it, and who is to blame, and if there has been any neglect, etc. Louis has been accused of neglecting his son's education, but he had excellent tutors and if he was backward in his studies, what can we expect of a sickly

boy of ten whose health was naturally the first consideration?

Two important events happened in July, 1480: the capture of Otranto by the Turks, which filled all Christian Europe with dismay, and the death of René of Anjou, Maine, Provence, and Bar, which brought forward the question of succession to all these provinces. The genial old Duke had spent the last years of his life in the peaceful serenity of his home in sunny Provence, amid the flowers and birds, with his love of art and poetry to keep him ever young at heart. "Se chauffer l'hiver à la cheminée du bon roi René" is a proverb in Provence, where his memory still lives. His second wife, the fair Jeanne de Laval, "la petite Bretonne," was left well provided for, but his daughter Marguerite had been a prisoner in England when his will was made, and he had only left her 3000 écus in one sum and 200 livres yearly. It was Louis who had paid her ransom, and who maintained her, and after her father's death, she renewed her gift of all her claims on the various provinces to the King. René had left Provence to his nephew, Charles Count of Maine, on whose death the following year it was bequeathed to the Crown of France, which also held Anjou and most of Bar. This was a great gain to France, as the command of that southern coast was most valuable for the trade of the kingdom. Louis had much affection for his uncle, and caused solemn funeral services to be performed in all the great churches, and "Masses for the repose of the soul of King René."

In order to unite the Christian princes against the infidels, the Pope sent his nephew, Giuliano della Rovere (later Julius II), as papal Legate to mediate

between Louis and Maximilian, who made many difficulties, and, in fact, the truce was only prolonged for seven months, from September 2, 1480, until the following April. It was proclaimed in Paris by sound of trumpet, as was the peace with England, which was renewed. The King writes to the Duchess of Milan soon after this, to suggest that her second daughter Anna, his niece, should marry the eldest son of Edward IV. He had a great belief in the value of alliances to preserve peace between nations. The Dauphin Charles was at this time promised to Edward's daughter Elizabeth. As a curious example of the King's intimate knowledge of Italian politics, there is a curious letter, very long and interesting, written to the Cardinal Giuliano, informing him that immediately after he left Rome a plot was formed against him by the bishops of Sebenique and Tournay, to deprive him of his legation. He was on very friendly terms with the Legate, and at his request had given Cardinal Balue and Harancourt Bishop of Verdun, their liberty from the Bastile cages after eleven years of imprisonment. The progress of the Turks is very much on his mind, and he expresses a strong wish to go and fight them as soon as he is at peace with all his neighbours.

But all these plans and hopes were abruptly put an end to by a very serious attack of illness at Chinon, in March, 1481; a slight stroke of apoplexy, which for the time deprived him of speech and memory. His doctor, with ideas on hygiene far in advance of his age, caused the windows to be opened, and the King slightly recovered. Two of his attendants who, with the best intentions, tried to keep him by force from

going near the window, were afterwards dismissed from the palace. Commines explains: "Il n'estoit rien dont il eust si grande crainte que de perdre son auctorité. . . ." He adds: "Il me fit signe que je couchasse en sa chambre . . . il voulut que je fusse tousjours auprès de lui. . . ." He gradually recovered his strength, and insisted upon seeing all his letters and dispatches and having them answered. He had not much faith in any physicians, even Angelo Catho above mentioned, whom he afterwards made Archbishop of Vienne, and by whose request Commines wrote his memoirs in after days. With little confidence in human science, he believed much in prayers and almsgiving. We hear of his attending a *neuvaine* with the Queen at the tomb of St. Martin, and each day that he heard Mass with her, he always gave an offering of thirty-one gold crowns. One day when he was in church, a poor clerk fell at his feet and said that he had been a year in prison for a debt of more than 1500 livres, and this Louis paid for him, saying, "As I pray God for pity, it is just that I should have pity on others."

As soon as Louis was strong enough, he travelled into Normandy to see the great camp which he had commanded to be established in a plain near Pont de l'Arche. Here were assembled 10,000 foot soldiers, including his Swiss levies, 2500 pioneers, and 1500 of his men-at-arms, "with a vast number of tents and pavilions and wagons to enclose all." This was to be a practical school for military training, a camp for war manœuvres, and on June 2, 1481, the King was present at a splendid review, and remained on the spot for ten days to examine most minutely the order

THE BLUE KING (LOUIS XI) TAKING COUNSEL TO SURPRISE THE WHITE KING (MAXIMILIAN)
By Burgkmair
Woodcut from *Der Weiss-Künig*

MAXIMILIAN FORTIFIES A CAMP WITH BAGGAGE WAGONS
By Burgkmair
Woodcut from *Der Weiss-Künig*

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and organization of every branch of the service. We have no space to enter into all the details of this splendid military enterprise, but here every new invention in the way of arms and artillery was encouraged, and we even notice a reward given for a machine meant to open secretly the gates of towns. But this great camp could not be maintained without enormous expense, computed at 1,500,000 livres a year; and unfortunately very heavy and doubtless cruel taxes were needed to maintain it. Thus it was inevitable that every successful scheme for the protection of his kingdom made the King more unpopular therein.

A report spread to England that Calais was threatened by this great army, but Louis wrote to Lord Hastings bidding him reassure King Edward on the subject of his peaceful intentions.

CHAPTER XV

1481-3

ILLNESS OF LOUIS XI—DEATH OF MARIE OF BURGUNDY—MANY LETTERS OF THE KING—PEACE OF ARRAS—MARGUERITE OF AUSTRIA BETROTHED TO THE DAUPHIN AT AMBOISE—ANNE OF FRANCE, WIFE OF PIERRE DE BEAUJEU, APPOINTED REGENT—LAST DAYS OF THE KING AT PLESSIS—DEATH OF LOUIS XI—CONTEMPORARY APPRECIATIONS OF HIS CHARACTER.

IN October, 1481, Louis XI had a second attack of apoplexy at Tours, which seemed more dangerous than the first, as for two hours he remained unconscious, and only gradually recovered his speech and the use of his faculties. When he was well enough to travel he went with his faithful Commines to the castle of Argenton, and afterwards to Thouars for January and February. But during this time the King received the ambassadors of Brittany and discussed their demands with his usual acuteness, granting them the salt dues and free passage of wine which they asked for. It is remarkable that these severe attacks of illness cause very little break in the King's constant letters on matters of policy, administration, and everything connected with the good of his kingdom. He is most urgent about the punctual payment of wages and of debts, various appointment to lay and clerical posts, the granting of

privileges to towns and permission to have fairs and markets, the remission of taxes in many cases, a number of pardons and remissions, often for offences against himself, and the request that lingering lawsuits, some of twenty, forty, or even sixty years, shall at once be brought to an end. One of these law-suits gives so curious a picture of the times that it is worthy of note, the more so as it brings into strong relief the King's earnest desire that absolute justice should be administered even in a case where his sympathy is evidently with the plaintiff.

A certain Hélène de Beaufort had been appointed Abbess of Leyme, a Cistercian convent for women, in 1459, but after some time her position was contested by the nun Jeanne Baras and her sister Fine, assisted by their brother, the Abbé Déode Baras. There had been much actual fighting, the Abbey being taken again and again by armed bands; furniture, jewels, and cattle had been pillaged, royal sergeants threatened with death, women and men, including the chaplain, cruelly ill-treated. This had gone on for years when the King writes to the *Parlement* that he insists upon a "good and brief" settlement of the matter, that he may have no need to write again. "Nostre bien amée Hélène de Beaufort," plaintiff on the one side, and the sisters Fine and Jehanne with Déode Baras on the other as defendants, for rebellion, disobedience to the orders of the Court, etc. ". . . lesquelz ne voulons demourer impugniz, se ainsi est que *à la vérité soient trouvez telz;* maiz voulons que par vous ilz soient corrigés, selon ce que trouverrez la matière disposée" (who are not to remain unpunished, *if indeed such is found to be the truth;* but we wish them to be corrected

by you, according to how you find the matter really stands).

This does not sound like the language of a despot, but rather of one whose sole aim is justice. There has been a rumour that Maximilian imitates the signature of Louis, and he gives the order on October 31, 1481, that in all matters of finance the signature of his secretary, Thomas Berbisey, shall also be attested. He will not be looked upon as a sick man, and on November 4, he announces : "je m'en retourne prendre et tuer les sangliers, affin que je ne perde pas la saison, en attendant l'autre pour prendre et tuer les Anglois. . . ." The English were supposed to be projecting an invasion.

As a personal matter, the King asks for a hat like the one the Bishop of Valence brought him from Rome. "Il me semble qu'il estoit de poil autre que bièvre . . . et couvroit toutes les espaulles et toute l'eschine jusques bien avant sur la croppe du cheval ; encore estoit il bien rebrassé devant et ès coustes, et ne falloit point de manteau contre la pluye ; et aussi pour le chault, il valloit une petit maison. . . ." (It seems to me that it was of a skin different from beaver . . . and covered all the shoulders and all the backbone unto far down on the crupper of the horse, and was well turned up in front and at the sides, and one needed no mantle against the rain ; and also for the heat, it was worth a little house.) In April, Louis paid his promised pilgrimage to St. Claude, travelling across France and the duchy of Burgundy almost to the confines of Savoy. Here the King heard of the death of the young Duke Philibert of Savoy, who had not long survived his mother, Yolande of France, and he at

once took steps to ensure the succession of Charles the next brother, a boy of fourteen. When Louis arrived at Beaujeu on his way home, he heard the news that Marie of Burgundy had died at Bruges in consequence of a fall from her horse. She left two young children, Philip and Marguerite, and the loss of his young wife, cut off in the flower of her age, was a deep and enduring grief to the Archduke Maximilian.[1] Political troubles were in store for him, as his children were in the power of the men of Ghent, who resolved to force him into peace with France, as thus they would remain free, his four-year-old son being their nominal ruler. Louis XI was quite willing to meet them half-way when they sent deputies to suggest the marriage of Mademoiselle Marguerite with the Dauphin, with some of the contested provinces as her dowry, thus making a permanent alliance between France and Flanders. Maximilian was scarcely consulted, as so far, Flanders and Brabant had not even acknowledged him as regent for his son.

In the month of May this year, Louis had to mourn the death of his sister, Jeanne de France, Duchess of Bourbon, who was deeply lamented "for her great virtues and noble qualities. "The year 1482 was a disastrous one for the country, as an epidemic followed a great famine, and both harvest and vines had failed. There were also great floods; the banks of the Loire were inundated, and other rivers, and Louis was so impressed with these ravages that he exempted from taxes all the neighbouring places. As his bodily strength declined, the King seemed to gain in moral

[1] For a full account see *Marguerite of Austria*, Christopher Hare, p. 18.

energy; never was he so full of anxious care about the most minute details of his Government. He writes to congratulate the governors of Provence and Burgundy on learning that brigandage had been put down in those provinces. He has constant letters to answer from abbeys, corporations, chapters, towns, etc., who apply for confirmation of the gifts they have received from him, probably as they fear that his life is drawing to a close. Louis appears to have been induced at this time to give William de la Marck the Boar of Ardennes, some help, which he soon withdrew on further acqaintance, and wrote to warn the Bishop and the states of Liége against him. Thus he was not responsible for La Marck's brutal murder of the Bishop some time later.

When his sister-in-law, Bona of Savoy, was persecuted by Lodovico Sforza, Louis used his influence to obtain permission for her to return to Milan, where negotiations were going on for her son's marriage. He was looked upon as a power in Italy, and always laboured for peace there.

He knew that his days were numbered, and his great anxiety was to leave his young son secure of the throne after him. On September 21, 1482, he summoned a great assembly of nobles at Amboise, and presented to them the Dauphin of twelve, with a long address, in which, amongst many other things, he points out his own mistake in not having kept on his father's ministers, and he trusts that his son will learn wisdom from the misfortunes which followed those changes on his accession. Later Louis of Orleans was required to take a solemn oath of allegiance to the Dauphin, as though the King had a presentiment of future troubles. Meantime Maximilian was beginning

to resign himself to the idea of the peace with France which the burghers so keenly desired, for there were troubles on every side, and he had neither money nor troops sufficient to protect the frontiers of the Netherlands, and sustain a conflict with Guelders, and Utrecht which had rebelled against its Burgundian bishop. Since the end of the truce, the French army had taken Aire, invaded Luxemburg, and threatened St. Omer. In November negotiations began openly with Louis, and on December 23, 1482, the Peace of Arras was concluded by which the Dauphin was to marry little Marguerite of Austria, with the counties of Artois, Franche-Comté, Maçon, and Auxerre, and the lordships of Salins, Bar-sur-Seine, and Noyers. After the treaty was signed the Flemish envoys attended a great service at Nôtre Dame in Paris, when the *Te Deum* was sung, and then went to Tours, where the King received them in a darkened room, but "death was written on his face, although he was clothed in ermine and velvet."

Anne of France and her husband, the Lord of Beaujeu, were commissioned to receive the little Princess, and they travelled to meet her at Hesdin, where she arrived in the care of her nurse, with a stately company before the end of May, and after a magnificent reception in Paris, she was solemnly betrothed to the Dauphin at Amboise on June 23, 1483.[1] There were splendid festivities in honour of this alliance which gave such an earnest of future peace, by order of the King, who could take no part in them, for in his sick chamber at Plessis-le-Tours, he knew that he was dying.

[1] See *Marguerite of Austria*, p. 22 (Christopher Hare).

It was while arrangements were being made for this marriage that Edward IV had died somewhat suddenly on April 9, 1483; and his anger and disappointment at the slight to his own daughter are by some writers supposed to have hastened his death. Yet it is doubtful if there had been a formal engagement, and the English King had never been a faithful ally of Louis, always ready to help Brittany and Burgundy against him, and refusing him to the last the title of "King of France." But when Richard III had seized his nephews and usurped the throne of England, Louis refused to reply to his letters or receive his ambassadors. These events only deepened his own anxiety for the future of the young Dauphin, on whom all his hopes were fixed. The great aim of the dying King was to secure peace on all sides. He endeavoured to save the Chancellor of the Duke of Brittany, Guillaume Chauvin, and adopted his children, whom he brought up at Tours. On the death of his nephew, François Phœbus, the King of Navarre, at the age of fifteen, he maintained the rights of the young sister Catherine to succeed him; this Princess, who married later Jean d'Albret, was the ancestress of Henry IV. Thus alike in Savoy and in Navarre, Louis protected the children of both his sisters.

René of Lorraine was conciliated by the gift of several towns and was now on the most friendly terms; in Italy the influence of Louis was respected, and only Brittany remained full of intrigues and secretly hostile. Only recently, Duke François, an old man now with two very young daughters by his second wife Marguerite of Foix, had wished to marry his eldest daughter Anne to the heir of Edward IV, and was

Photo by Bruckman

MAXIMILIAN I

After the painting by P. P. RUBENS

To face p. 256

now seeking some other disturbing alliance. But Louis had gained the goodwill of the great nobles of Brittany. Pope Sixtus was completely reconciled and could refuse the King nothing. When Louis wished to have a visit from the saintly hermit François de Paule, it was the Pope who persuaded him to leave his cell in Calabria, and he used his authority to persuade the priors of St. Rémy of Rheims to send the sick man the "sainte ampoule" (miraculous oil), and also caused many other relics to be brought. Although the King's health grew worse, and he was so "thin and changed, a very skeleton," the stream of his letters remains as constant as ever. There was so much to do and so little time remaining to him. Again there are remissions, rewards, grants to towns of various privileges, fairs, and markets. Anne de Beaujeu and her husband are much with him and he likes them to take part in the government. He sends frequent offerings to churches and asks for the prayers of the faithful.

Louis takes great pleasure in the simple piety of the hermit, and as he eats neither meat nor fish, the King writes to Languedoc on June 29: "de lui envoyer pour le sainct homme des oranges douces et des poires muscadelles." He is no longer able to enjoy his favourite sport of hunting, but he still takes keen interest and pleasure in all kinds of birds and beasts, and he also tries to acclimatize foreign plants. He sends minute directions about his white peacocks, we hear of galleys coming to Provence with strange and savage beasts, amongst others, some lions no bigger than foxes which are called "adits." He has elks and reindeer sent from Sweden and Norway, and he is especially grateful to the

Duke of Ferrara for sending, at his request, "a leopard which takes hares well," evidently one of those hunting leopards or cheetahs of which Lorenzo dei Medici was also so fond. Louis sends fine sporting dogs in exchange, for he never could endure to receive a gift without making a suitable return. From his sick room he is still the absolute ruler of France, and woe to any one who thinks to take advantage of his infirmities. Thus the Archbishop of Tours, when he was asked to pray to God for the King's health, thought it a good opportunity to remonstrate against the taxes and interference with prelates; but he was at once told that "il n'avoit que faire de s'en mesler plus avant. . . ." There is a coalition amongst the bakers in the south to sell the bread too dear, which he very promptly stops as well as various exactions of his officers. As late as the month of August, he renews his treaty with the Hansa League. Yet he appears to have submitted to much from the hands of his doctors, especially one, Jacques Coictier, who extorted from his master over 50,000 crowns during the last five months of his life.

With the eager desire of Louis to finish so many important works which he had begun, while he was watching death approach step by step, we do not wonder that he sent for musicians, "jouers de doux et bas instruments," to beguile the long hours of suffering and isolation. For in those latter days he was lonely indeed in that grim castle with its towers and moats, its strong defences, and the archers keeping watch and ward night and day, and only a few of his most intimate circle admitted to his presence. He could not forget how many violent deaths there had been of late amongst great princes; yet after all, the

protection of such a strongly guarded castle was not unusual in those days of feud and faction.

The King's life was drawing to a close. On Monday, August 25, he had a third attack more violent than the others, and although he slowly recovered his faculties, he knew that the end had come, and sent at once for his son-in-law, Monseigneur de Bourbon. To him he solemnly entrusted the care of his son the Dauphin, who was at Amboise, sending him a special message, and giving further directions with regard to his attendants. He also sent all his falcons and his hunting establishment to Amboise, for he had now done with the things of this world. In looking back upon his past life, it struck him that he had perhaps abused his influence with Louis of Amboise to obtain his inheritance to the prejudice of his family, and that he had also possibly had no right to certain lands of La Tremoille. He therefore requested that his son should be asked to restore these possessions, and as Talmont had been given to Commines, he was to have 2000 livres de rente instead. Legeay gives his authorities for believing that the King sent for the Queen his wife, his nearest kindred, and the Princes of the Blood, once more recommending to them the care of his son, and then with fresh hope and courage prepared for his end.

When he was abruptly told that death was at hand, his reply was simple and full of trust: "J'espère que Dieu m'aidera." "He bore himself patiently and wisely to the last, never complaining, though his sufferings were great, and attending devoutly to the last offices of the Church," says one of his enemies. His mind was full of the "poor people of France," who had

so much need of a good peace. It was on Saturday, August 30, 1483, between seven and eight in the evening, that Louis XI passed away with the closing words of the *Te Deum* on his lips: "Lord, in Thee have I trusted, let me never be confounded." He was sixty-one years of age, and had reigned for twenty-three years.

The King was buried, as he had desired, at Nôtre Dame de Cléry, where on his tomb was placed the monument for which he had given full directions more than a year before. He wished to be represented on his knees with clasped hands before the image of "Nôtre Dame," the face to be a likeness, with the nose long and aquiline, wearing the collar of St. Michael and a sword, with his dog by his side.

After reading the account of Louis XI's death, we cannot help feeling that he was strong in the conviction that he had fulfilled his mission as he understood it, and that until his last breath he was occupied with the destiny and prosperity of his country. A brave end may follow upon an evil life, as, for instance, during the brief excitement of a death upon the scaffold, conscious of the breathless interest of a gazing multitude. The supreme test is when man, in full and clear possession of his faculties, watches the slow approach of death on a bed of sickness. Then indeed is his inmost soul revealed, and the mask of dissimulation falls.

It appears that for long after his death a very different opinion prevailed, with regard to Louis XI, from that to which we are accustomed. Thus, at the meeting of the deputies of France at the States-General, five months after his death, this was the strain

in which Maitre Jean de Rely, Canon of Paris, the chosen orator, addressed the young King Charles and the great assembly: "Blessed be God who put this desire for concord in the heart of the King, your late father, who has thus left this kingdom in peace and in great union. Blessed may he be for having rooted out the causes from whence division could spring. The French people is bound to pray God for him, as he has left us the legacy of peace which our Lord gave to His disciples. . . . Having always before our eyes this great union in which he has left this kingdom, and the labour which he imposed upon himself all his life to attain it, do not let us be ungrateful. . . ."

He was even represented as a saint on the doorway of the church of the Carthusians at Tours, and with him were Louis IX, the Virgin, and the arms of France. Commines, who knew the King so intimately, writing his Memoirs in later days when flattery would be quite wasted, solemnly declares that "God had created Louis XI wiser, more generous, more virtuous than other men, and that there were in him more qualities suitable to a king and a prince than in any others." Again: "o God alone belongs perfection; but when in one prince, virtue and good qualities far outweigh all faults, he is worthy of high memory and praise. . . . I dare well say of him to his honour that it does not seem to me that I have ever known any prince who had fewer vices than he had. . . ." In these words Commines possibly alludes to his own positive declaration that after the death of the Dauphin's infant son Joachim, in 1459, his moral character was without reproach. During the interval between his two marriages. Louis is believed to have

had four illegitimate daughters; three of them he acknowledged, and provided for with suitable marriages.

His reign was a great contrast to that of his father Charles VII, for the French Court was in high repute and estimation, and the Queen, Charlotte of Savoy, was without a rival; an unusual distinction for a royal lady of those days. She was a simple, pious woman, not very attractive or interesting, and although we find her present at great festivals and stately receptions, she preferred a quiet life at Amboise, where she spent most of her time in later years. There is evidence that the King frequently visited her there, from the headings of his edicts and letters, and she constantly accompanied him in his frequent pilgrimages. When some of her subjects wished to make her a present after her own heart, they caused a beautiful and curious manuscript to be illuminated, showing the sanctuary of Nôtre-Dame-du-Puy, and the pilgrimages which she had made there with the King (*Bibliothèque Nationale*, No. 8004).

The Queen did not long survive the loss of her husband; she died on December 1, 1483, at Amboise, and was buried by his side in Nôtre-Dame-de-Cléry. Her daughter Jeanne, the unfortunate wife of Louis d'Orleans, was with her during the last months of her life, and is specially mentioned in her mother's will, where we do not find the name of the great Anne of France. Possibly the Queen had less sympathy with her capable determined elder daughter, than with the gentle, saintly Jeanne. Amongst other personal property Charlotte left forty-seven dresses of satin, velvet, and cloth, many of them richly trimmed with pre-

cious furs; a quantity of valuable jewels and a fine library.

A few more contemporary appreciations of the late King will be interesting.

Commines esteems Louis XI to have been "one of the three greatest men who have reigned for a hundred years." The other two were Mahomet II and Mathias Corvinus, King of Hungary. Curiously enough, Francis Bacon expresses the same opinion later in his eulogy of Henry VII, although he makes another selection, for he says: "Louis XI, Ferdinando, and Henry may be esteemed the *tres magi* of kings of those ages." It may be well to give a few remarks of usually unfriendly historians. Thus Pierre Mathieu says: "In this prince, faith was without superstition or hypocrisy; clemency without fear; justice without cruelty; prudence without cunning; he was liberal without prodigality, skilful without artifice or dissimulation." Claude de Seyssel remarks: "Many of his contemporaries speak incessantly of this King, of his deeds and his sayings, and praise him up to the skies, saying that he was the wisest, the most powerful, the most generous, and the most fortunate King of France. . . ." Barante says: "That there was in him a *savoir-faire*, a knowledge of men and affairs, a prudence, an intelligence far above other princes, a genius capable of understanding everything."

With regard to the keen intelligence of Louis there has never been any difference of opinion. The chief distractions of his exile as Dauphin at Genappe were literary. He joined the University of Louvain as an associated member, and there made the acquaintance of the learned Vasselius Gansfortius, whom he brought

to Paris later. In those days of his poverty there was no sacrifice which he would not make to procure rare manuscripts, of which he had a splendid collection, and he was always ready to befriend the learned men who had recently been compelled to flee from Constantinople. In his home at Genappe he formed a small academy, where his friends and men of letters of his acquaintance met together to read out, each one in turn, amusing stories after the style of Boccaccio who was the fashion at that day. They were called the "Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles," and were often burlesque and coarse, but very useful for the improvement of the French language, as was the later *Heptameron* of Marguerite of Valois which was not much more refined.

It has been remarked that in the immense number of letters preserved, written by Louis XI, there is an elegance of expression which is not found in his contemporaries. He dictated them himself to any notary's clerk who chanced to be at hand, for Brantôme tells us that he did not always take a secretary about with him. Yet he certainly had an Italian secretary with him at Péronne. But the most interesting literary work of Louis XI was the *Rozier des guerres*, which is the only part left to us of a great general history which he caused to be written for the instruction of his son, and of which much was his own work. He tells us that history is the most direct lesson for all, especially for kings. "The record of things past is the most profitable, as well to console, advise, and comfort us against adversity, as to avoid the inconveniences before which others have fallen, and to encourage us to do well like the best. . . . For it is a great pleasure

and pastime to recite past things; to know how, in what manner and in what time, have befallen losses, conquests, and the taking of towns and countries. . . ." Again he adds: "The world teaches those who dwell in it by those who have left it; death is a light thing to him who is certain that good will come to him afterwards. . . . The public matter is far above the individual interest by which often the public good is prevented. . . . When kings and princes have no regard to the law, they take away from the people that which they ought to have left . . . in fact, they make the people serfs, and lose the title of king, for no one should be called king who does not reign over free men (Francs)."

We must not omit to mention the material advantages which Louis XI procured for France. His great desire was to bring order into the finances, the army, and the navy of France, which he first created; and to improve in every way the administration of justice. He devoted constant thought and labour to the advancement of commerce and the establishment of new industries, such as silk and woollen manufacture, and we remember the encouragement which he gave to the planting of mulberry trees. The invention of the art of printing and the setting up of printing presses received from Louis the greatest encouragement; one was set up at Metz, 1471; Lyons, 1473; Angers, 1477; Poitiers, 1479; Caen, 1480; and Troyes, 1483. He delighted in the arts of painting and drawing which enriched the beautiful manuscripts of the time, and was a liberal patron to Jean Fouquet, who painted on wood as well as miniatures on parchment. A Florentine, Francesco Florio, a great admirer of Fouquet,

speaks of Louis as "justissimus princeps." He also spread the taste for music, by introducing organs into churches and monasteries. In the way of science he encouraged the serious study of surgery, and he gave every facility for the working of mines. He took great interest in the making of ports and harbours, and also the building of dykes and other public works. By his care the royal library was greatly increased; he sought out learned men and encouraged them to come to his universities; in short, we may say that he prepared the way for the French Renaissance of letters, of which perhaps Charles of Orleans and Villon were amongst the earlier poets.

The Italian blood which Duke Charles had inherited from his mother, Valentine Visconti, mingled with the Valois strain, produced a gentle dreamy poet. Amongst the slight charming lines which he wrote, is one little-known rondel, which strikes a deeper note of pensive longing. It may have taken birth in his mind in the placid evening of his days as, with his gay retinue around him, he journeyed from one stately home to another. A fragment of the poet's work will tell us more than pages of description.

En la forest de Longue Attente
Chevauchant par divers sentiers,
M'en voys, ceste année présente
Ou voyage de Desiriérs!
Devant sont allez mes fourriers
Pour appareiller mon logis,
En la cité de Destinée,
Et pour mon cueur et moy ont pris
L'ostellerie de Pensée.

With regard to Villon, whose tuneful days ended at the accession of Louis XI, perhaps his masterpiece is

the well-known "Ballade des Dames du temps jadis," the long Roll-Call of Dead Ladies, with the haunting refrain—

Mais où sont les neiges d'antan? (ante annum)

Amongst prose writers of this reign, the historian, Philippe de Commines, Sire d'Argenton, has no rival. We have already alluded to the "Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles," to which Louis as Dauphin had himself contributed.

The splendid gifts of the King to churches and abbeys may have done much to encourage the ecclesiastical architecture of the fifteenth century, which was chiefly devoted to the beautifying and perfection of buildings already in existence. Thus we note the splendid portal of Bayeux Cathedral, the nave of that of Troyes, Saint Ouen in the city of Rouen, Nôtre-Dame-de-Cléry, and many other beautiful instances of carved work. But still more was done at this period in the way of civic architecture, when the watchful protection of Louis gave ample scope to the vigorous life and energy of the towns; and everywhere the stately hôtel-de-ville rose as an emblem of newly-born municipal power, as, for instance, at Compiègne, Douai, Béthune, St. Omer, Noyon, St. Quentin, Dreux, Orléans, Saumur, and Evreux. Such were the fruits of that growing peace and prosperity whose full harvest the King did not live to see.

CHAPTER XVI

Review of the Life of Louis XI—Cause of his Unpopularity—Enmity of the Burgundian Chroniclers—Some Attempt to trace the Origin of the Evil Repute in which the King's Memory is held.

We cannot close the story of Louis XI without some endeavour to trace the origin of the "concert of maledictions" which have assailed his memory in later days. Perhaps a remark of the Abbé Le Grand, who devoted a lifetime to the study of this period, may point out the primary cause of this reprobation. "As it was needful for Louis XI, in order to establish law and order in the kingdom, to punish various great lords, even princes of the blood, such as the dukes of Alençon and Bourbon—the King being also the persistent enemy of the great House of Burgundy—and as all these lords and princes had chroniclers in their pay, we cannot wonder that the King of France received from them the character of a sanguinary tyrant." We must also remember that, after Charles VIII, another branch of Valois succeeded to the throne in the person of Louis XII, who had a personal hatred for Louis XI, who carried out a policy in Italy absolutely opposed to his, and at the same time encouraged an aristocratic reaction.

Unfortunately for the King it was not only with the great nobles as a class that he was unpopular,

but also with the bourgeoisie of France, the mass of the common people for whom he had laboured and struggled all through his reign, and on whose behalf he had spent himself, lived a life of personal poverty and sacrifice, and grown old before his time. They could not forgive him the heavy taxation, severely enforced, which was the inevitable price they had to pay for peaceful security in their lives and their homes, freedom from their oppressors the proud feudal lords, and equal justice for rich and poor. Men soon forget the sorrows of the past, and at the death of Louis it was almost a generation since the horrors of war had raged in their midst, and the unpaid mercenaries, the "écorcheurs" ravaged all they held dear, looking upon it as their right to "manger le bonhomme." All this had become a dim memory of bygone days, while the hated collector of taxes was a grim reality in their midst. There was no glamour about King Louis XI to appeal to the imagination of his subjects. He laboured so earnestly for peace, that they had no glorious victories to applaud, bought with the bitter payment of their blood and tears. The people had no gay and splendid Court to gape at and admire, very few costly entertainments, and no extravagance paid for by their labour. Homely in person and badly dressed, Louis, it was said, could not afford a new hat, but there was always money forthcoming for the good of the country.

Before he came to the throne, while he still served his novitiate as Dauphin, his clear insight had convinced him that peace was the one thing absolutely needed for his distracted land; and so great was his horror of war and the hopeless misery which it brings

in its train, that he was always ready to avoid it by any sacrifice of mere money. To ensure peace it was needful to be strong, and for this purpose he gradually formed a splendid and powerful army, with the finest siege and field artillery in the world, and a navy which could hold its own against England and Holland. All the frontier towns were strongly fortified and provided with sufficient garrisons; he had extended his borders where there was danger of invasion, and the great feudal lords had been compelled to acknowledge the immediate authority of the Crown. More than once he had bought the towns of the Somme in Picardy, and had at last regained them by force. The Duchy of Burgundy was united to France as well as Roussillon and Perpignan, which brought its defences down to the barrier range of the Pyrenees, while Provence, Anjou, and Maine were now incorporated in the kingdom. Such increase of strength was a magnificent guarantee for peace, but it was impossible that all this should have been accomplished without money, and for the most part the people of France were glad to enjoy the blessing of peace, but bitterly grudged the price. Had Louis XI lived a few more years, no doubt he would have greatly diminished the burden of taxation, as, unlike his inexperienced young son, he would never have wasted immense sums on a fruitless campaign in Italy.

Having thus shown how Louis missed to a great extent the love of his people, we will consider the various chroniclers of his time, and the light in which they regarded him. We will take first the writers who dwelt at the Court of Burgundy, whose devotion towards the "great Duke of the West" caused them to

find nothing worthy of praise which did not tend to his glory and honour. Georges Chastellain, Jean Molinet, Olivier de la Marche, Mathieu de Coucy, and Jacques Meyer were all in their way poets as well as historians. They were not only prepared to hate Louis XI as the enemy of their Duke Charles, but they could only despise a King who had no delight in tournaments and sumptuous festivals, and was like a simple bourgeois in his tastes.

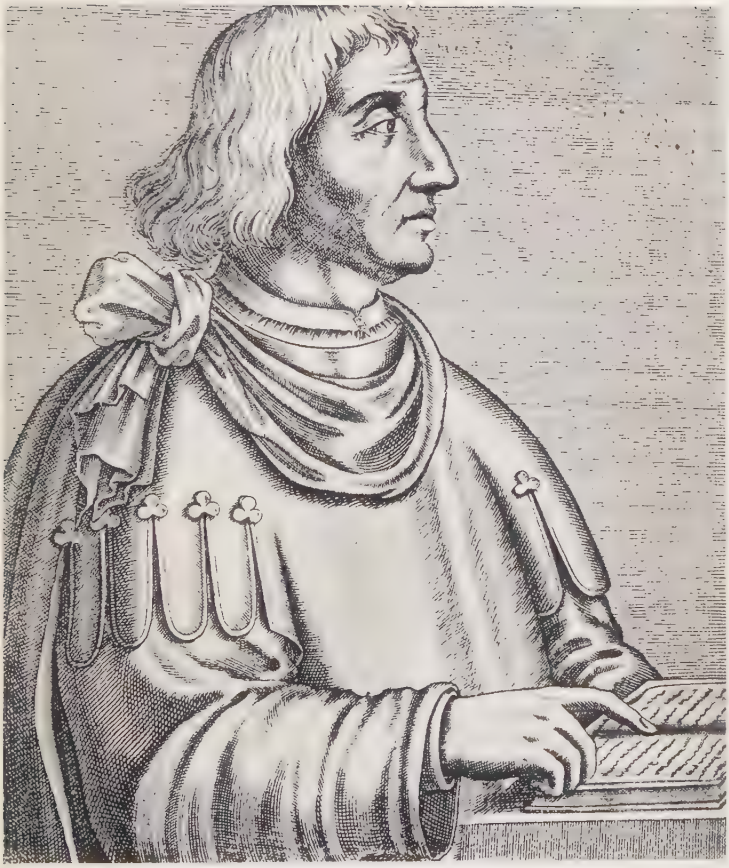
The Chronicles of Chastellain, written in grandiloquent style, show constant enmity to Louis; indeed, in his life of Duke Philip of Burgundy, Chastellain actually hints that the Dauphin had sought to hasten his father's death by witchcraft; and he never fails to repeat any calumny until, in 1475, his Chronicle is interrupted by death. Yet this author could write with charm and sympathy, as when he seeks to comfort Marguerite of Anjou by pointing out the heroic serenity of her father René . . . "ne quelle mutation en as veu . . . parquoy sa vertu s'en trouve moins clère? . . ."

Jean Molinet, Canon of Valenciennes and Librarian, later, of Marguerite of Austria, followed in the same line, and amongst other slighting remarks, taunted Louis XI by saying that "he would rather lose 10,000 écus than one archer." Olivier de la Marche was the chamberlain of Charles the Bold, and his Memoirs cover the period from 1435 to 1492. Legeay points out that this man, who was employed by his master to kidnap Yolande of Savoy and her family, was not likely to have any scruples in his devotion to the cause of Charles and his hostility to all his enemies. Mathieu de Coucy and Jacques Meyer were both under Bur-

gundian influence, and gave the blackest interpretation to every action of Louis.

Duke François of Brittany and Jean of Alençon had also their historians, who were only too ready to repeat and believe any calumny against the suzerain who compelled their princes to submission. Thomas Basin, Bishop of Lisieux, is another writer whose career gives the key to his prejudiced account of Louis XI. He strongly supported Charles of France in his rebellion against his brother, and aspired to rule both Normandy and the young Duke, but when Charles lost his new duchy, Basin sought the favour of the King, who not only forgave him, but sent him to Perpignan as Chancellor of Roussillon, and gave his brothers important posts. This was in 1648, but for some unexplained reason, possibly a quarrel with the Minister Balue, the Bishop forsook his see, and fled to Geneva, where he is said to have joined a conspiracy against France. In any case, Thomas Basin was henceforth the deadly enemy of the King, and in his learned Latin history of the reigns of Charles VII and Louis XI, he praises the father far beyond his deserts, while no words are strong enough for his execration and hatred for his late master, Louis.

Robert Gaguin, General of the Mathurins, who made a failure of his mission to Burgundy in 1477, appears to take his revenge in attacks on Louis in his Latin works published after the King's death. On the other hand the *Chronique Scandaleuse* of Jean de Troyes was only scandalous in name, and he is a contemporary witness of great value. The fantastic title was chosen and a few imaginary anecdotes were inserted, most probably, to give the book the appearance of a



PHILIPPE DE COMMINES

From an old print

To face p. 272

romance, as the writing of history was the exclusive privilege of a court chronicler. Of Philippe de Commines, the true historian of this period, we will speak more fully later.

So much for contemporary writers, but when we reach the reign of Louis XII, there was no surer way of gaining the favour of this King than by speaking evil of Louis XI. It was also necessary to prove that the marriage with Jeanne was by cruel compulsion, as Louis of Valois had determined to divorce her and marry Anne of Brittany. Claude de Seyssel, Bishop of Marseilles, undertook the task of justifying his patron, and in order to exalt Louis XII he has no scruple in depreciating all the most honoured names amongst former kings of France, and repeats every slander of earlier writers against Louis XI. As Etienne Pasquier says: "Claude de Seyssel a moins fait le panégyrique de Louis XII que la vie médisante de Louis XI." Other writers follow in his train, with endless calumny and satire. The Abbé le Grand remarks: "It is on the partial testimony of these authors that an idea has been formed of the reign of Louis XI far removed from the truth. With constant ill-will they have distorted . . . all his good deeds; denied all his good qualities; and in exaggerating beyond measure all that might be found fault with in his character, in his appearance and his 'manière d'être,' they have made an odious and entirely conventional type, but contrary to the reality." Le Grand devoted his life to historical work, and his thirty-one volumes of *Pièces*, still in MSS. in the Bibliothèque Nationale, have been most valuable to all students of this period.

As time passed on, this tendency to romance became

still stronger, for in the gay satirical Court of Francis I, it was much more entertaining to laugh at Louis XI than to examine the truth of every amusing story about him. The Sire de Brantôme clearly saw this, and being also a champion of the aristocracy and well grounded in Burgundian chronicles, he followed the taste of the day, and delighted the Court and the town with his lively fictions; "fables recueillies d'abord par un ennemi, puis, répandues par le conteur gasçon Brantôme," as Michelet says.

In the reign of Henry IV, Pierre Mathieu, historian and poet, received the command to write the King's life. "Compilateur médiocre, (plus sentencieux quel véridique," he had a sense of dramatic effect, and wanted a contrast to set off his master, and he therefore chose Louis XI, repeating all the old calumnies in order to exalt the character of Henry IV. André Duchesne, selected by Richelieu as *historiographe*, was one of the earliest writers to make a conscientious study of former history, and he certainly renders justice to Louis XI. After this we have a succession of historians, Varillas, Mézeray, the President Hénault, Daniel, Garnier, Duclos, and others, who all follow the line of least resistance, and for the most part take their account of Louis from the Burgundian chroniclers and their followers. The Academician Duclos worked to some extent from the MSS. of Le Grand, and his *Preuves* are his best works.

A modern French writer is very indignant with Sir Walter Scott for holding up to ridicule and detestation a King of France in *Quentin Durward;* and he points out amongst other errors that Tristan l'Hermite, who had been Provost-Marshal of Charles VII and Louis XI,

died some years before the latter King, and had long previously resigned his office. But we are too grateful to the Wizard of the North for the pleasure he has given us, to expect from him historical accuracy. M. de Barante, who also wrote early in the last century, is a serious and important historian, but he writes the lives of the dukes of Burgundy, and possibly by the constant study of Burgundian chronicles, he becomes imbued with their prejudices, although he contradicts some of the most atrocious calumnies against Louis, and says of him that "those who had lived in the confidence of the King were drawn to him in profound attachment and admiration." He also remarks that "one cannot refuse him the credit of having made the kingdom greater than ever, of having earned the respect of all Christendom, of having added to the crown Burgundy, Artois, Provence, Anjou, Bar, and Roussillon." Yet M. de Barante never forgave Louis for having been the enemy of Burgundy.

Michelet is a name of great weight and importance, and he was a profound student of the fifteenth century. He was no flatterer of princes, but the passionate advocate of a martyred people, when he speaks of the towns of Flanders ruined and destroyed by the dukes of Burgundy. Can we ever forget that vivid, pathetic image of the weaver of Ghent starting forth from his dim workroom as the great bell Roland tolls to summon the *métiers;* "l'ouvrier mystique, le lollard illuminé, le tisserand visionnaire. . ." This picturesque historian does indeed dismiss as fables most of the horrible calumnies against the King, but if he had studied the royal letters he would have appreciated more the deep, unceasing love of Louis for his

people—the bourgeois of the towns, the toiling mass of his poorest subjects—for whose sake, as Michelet owns, he "closed the barriers of France on every side and founded perpetual peace."

To obtain a just estimate of Louis XI we must go back to the man who lived in his most intimate society, who knew him best and of whom Ronsard writes :—

> . . ni pour duc ni pour roi
> Il n'a voulu trahir d'historien la foi.

From the time when Philippe de Commines fled from the Court of Burgundy to enter the service of Louis XI, he was a constant witness, keen, intelligent, and watchful, of every action of his master. He was no flattering court historian seeking to win favour from his sovereign, for his *Memoirs* were only written some years after the death of Louis, when he could look back without favour or prejudice upon the past. Comparing him to Joinville, Sainte-Beuve speaks of him as a "prud' homme." This word includes all the virtues, wisdom prudence, courage, skill . . . civil honesty, and "le comme il faut. . . ." "Good faith breathes in all that he tells us. This good faith is with him a kind of raciness which animates his words and always inspires him with the most truthful and picturesque expression. One feels that he would not lie even to increase our admiration for the hero whom he desires to make us love."

Montaigne admires his simple, truthful narration, the authority and gravity with which he represents Louis, "de bon lieu, élevé aux grandes affaires." Sleidan, who translated the *Mémoires* into Latin, holds Commines up as a model, "only praising those of his

country and his prince as truth required." As we have already seen, Commines never swerves in his allegiance to the memory of Louis XI as a great and good man. He is not blind to any defects of his master, and he may be sometimes forgetful and inaccurate in small matters of detail, but the firm, undoubting estimate of his royal friend's character with him only became mellowed by time, and he gives us the solemn assurance that "he has never seen a better prince." We are the more inclined to believe his testimony, as his *Mémoires* were written at the request of Angelo Catho, Archbishop of Vienne, who had also known the King intimately and would be quick to notice any false appreciations.

On modern writers concerning Louis XI it would be far beyond the scope of this work to dwell fully, but I feel sure that the recent publication, by the Société Historique de France, of the Letters of Louis XI will have a great influence on the opinion of future historians. Kirk's *History of Charles of Burgundy* is so well known from Freeman's *Essay*, that I need only allude to it as an encyclopædia of all that the chroniclers of Burgundy have said in favour of Duke Charles and to the discredit of his enemy, Louis XI.

But as the great archivist M. Etienne Charavay remarks: "To all these writers an indispensable element of information has been wanting: the correspondence of the man whose private and public life they were relating."

Of the more recent school of French history, Urbain Legeay is the most thorough and scholarly in his massive work on the critical rehabilitation of his hero Louis XI, published in 1874. Professor of La

Faculté des Lettres at the University of Grenoble for the greater part of his life, he devoted more than ten years of indefatigable study to the original documents relating to the history of the period. As he says in his Preface: "Sans parti pris . . . après avoir cherché dans des milliers de volumes, nous avons voulu être juste pour Louis XI comme pour ses contemporains. Il nous a semblé que tout homme, fût-il roi, qui a fait ainsi, pour servir utilement sa patrie, le sacrifice des joies de la vie, même de sa popularité, et s'est livré pour l'accomplissement du devoir au plus dur labeur, a droit à nos respects et à notre gratitude." (Without prejudice . . . after having searched through thousands of volumes, we desire to be just to Louis XI as to his contemporaries. It has seemed to us that any man, even if he were a king, who has thus made the sacrifice of all the joys of life, even of his popularity, to serve his country aright, and who to fulfil his duty has devoted himself to the hardest labour, has a right to our respect and our gratitude.)

Legeay points out the previous deplorable condition of France: "La noblesse ne se piquait que d'une valeur brutale et se croyait tout permis. Le soldat mal payé ne vivait que de brigandage. Le paysan n'était point en sûreté dans sa maison. On ne pouvait marcher qu'armé. On n'entendait parler que d'assassinats, de violences de toutes sortes. . . ." (The nobles only prided themselves on brutal valour, and thought all things permitted to them. The soldier, badly paid, only lived by brigandage. The peasant was not safe in his own house. One could not travel without being armed. Nothing was talked of but assassinations and violence of all sorts. . . .)

Still fresh in the minds of men was the deplorable end of Jeanne d'Arc, of Jacques Cœur; the death of Gilles de Bretagne; the conduct of Adolphe de Gueldres towards his father; the atrocious cruelty of the dukes of Burgundy towards the town of Flanders which demanded too loudly their ancient privileges; crimes, violence, and injustice on every side—an age of such brutality as in these milder days of rose-water methods we cannot possibly realize. "Qu'on ne se s'étonne donc pas que dans la justice du règne de Louis XI il y ait encore trace de se qui se passait avant lui. Ce qui doit étonner, au contraire, c'est le progrès qu'il fit faire à la justice en respectant les formes et en proclamant l'inamovibilité des juges. N'a-t-il pas dit au parlement, par lettres patentes, de rendre bonne justice, nonobstant tout écrit qu'on pourrait, par importunité, avoir obtenu de sa complaisance?" "A l'envisager au point de vue des intérêts matériels, en le voyant introduire en France tout ce qu'il peut rêver d'arts utiles florissant ailleurs, abaisser toutes les entraves qui nuisent à la circulation intérieure ou à l'exportation de tous les produits, creuser des ports, faciliter l'exploitation de nos mines, améliorer les communications par terre et par eau, créer l'institution des postes, encourager le travail par son exemple, atteindre de son regard les actes les plus minutieux de l'administration, enfin stipuler dans ses traités la liberté la plus étendue même au sein de la guerre, on ne peut s'empêcher d'admirer cette activité si bien inspirée." (We should not be surprised that in the justice of the reign of Louis XI there is still some trace of what happened before his time. On the contrary, that which should surprise us is the progress

which justice made with him, for he caused its forms to be respected, and proclaimed the immovability of the judges. Has he not commanded the *Parlement*, by letters patent, to render strict justice, notwithstanding any writing which might have been obtained by importunity, from his good-nature?

Looking at him from the point of view of material interests, seeing him introduce into France all that he can imagine of useful arts flourishing elsewhere, laying low all the obstacles which interfere with internal circulation or the exportation of all products, making ports, aiding the working of mines, improving communication by land and water, creating a postal service, encouraging labour by his example, keeping a watchful eye upon the minutest acts of the administration, finally stipulating in his treaties for the fullest liberty even in the midst of war—one cannot do otherwise than admire this activity so well inspired.)

Such is the estimate of this earnest seeker after truth, who quotes M. Bardoux: "Ce fut donc là un grand règne, prince déjà moderne, il pense que les traités et les règlements valent mieux que les coups de lance."

I cannot do better than end with the last word spoken on the subject in England, on page 415 of the *Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. I, "The Reformation." "One figure stands out above all others, Louis XI, the only one who both reigned and governed. Whether we condemn or condone the remorseless vigour with which he pursued his public acts, whether we regret the absolute monarchy which he established, or accept it as the only possible salvation of France, we cannot deny to him the name of great.

"Great he was in intellect and in tenacity of purpose, great in prosperity and even greater in misfortune. Whatsoever he did had its determined end, and that end was the greatness of France.

"The universal condemnation which he has incurred may be ascribed chiefly to two causes: the unrelenting sternness with which he visited treachery in the great, and the severity of the taxation which he found it necessary to impose. The world was shocked by the fate of Jean d'Armagnac, Jacques de Nemours, Louis de St. Pol, Cardinal Balue, and by the cynical methods which achieved their ruin. Looking back without passion, we pronounce their sentence just. The burden of taxes was cruel, and the stories we read in Brantôme and elsewhere . . . are probably not without foundation. These methods may be supposed to have been required to bring the enormous taxes in. . . .

"In the struggle for life and death in which France was engaged, those taxes and perhaps those executions saved her; the King's crimes were national crimes, and national crimes are not to be judged by the standards of domestic morality. The France of Louis XII is the justification of Louis XI."[1]

[1] Stanley Leathes, M.A.

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